

WILLIAM O. STANLEY

University of Illinois

B. OTHANEL SMITH

University of Illinois

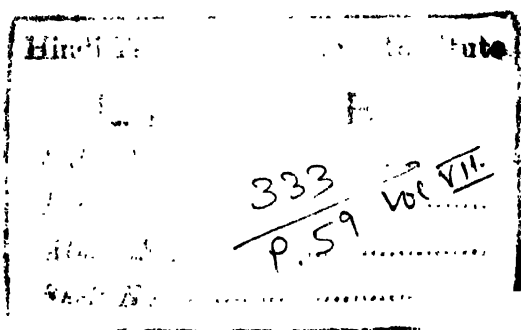
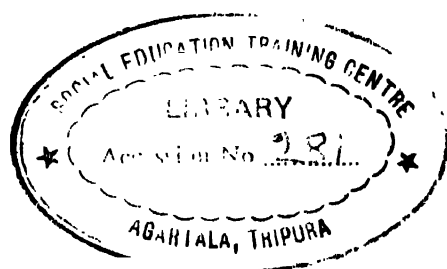
KENNETH D. BENNE

Boston University

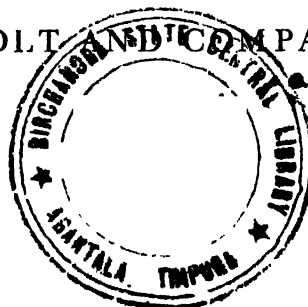
ARCHIBALD W. ANDERSON

University of Illinois

SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION



A HOLT-DRYDEN BOOK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY, INC.



24

28104-0116

Manufactured in the United States

Preface



The purpose of this book is to acquaint the student with the social forces that influence education and the ways in which the educational enterprise is affected by them.

It has become evident in recent years that teachers in training as well as those in service need to understand the social foundations of education no less than the psychological factors involved in the educative process. But it has been difficult for students, particularly the less advanced, to locate and make use of the many relevant contributions to knowledge that are scattered throughout the literature of the several social sciences. In the present volume of text and readings, therefore, we have brought together selected materials from the fields of sociology, cultural anthropology, economics, and political and social theory, as well as social psychology and educational sociology, and focused them upon the significant issues and problems in education.

Because we are aware of the need for a broad social perspective if localism and provincialism are to be avoided, we have attempted to show how each issue or problem is rooted in national and world conditions no less than in the immediate pressures and entanglements of the local community. Although we have emphasized fundamental social issues and concepts rather than examples and cases of possibly transitory significance, we have attempted to show the relevance of these issues and concepts to educational problems by relating them to current school programs and practices. Throughout, it has been our intention to select materials that will help the student to feel, personally and intimately, the tensions and pressures produced by the complex of social forces operating in the present period of social and technological change.

Many of the educational questions which we have chosen for examination are controversial; therefore, we have attempted to present opposing views, to indicate the facts and outline the opinions on the various sides. Wherever possible, we have included extensive selections rather than short ones, so as to allow each position to be set forth in detail and to avoid the misinterpretations that can occur in the absence of sufficient context.

The selections have been set into a textual frame, which, by defining terms, concepts, and interrelationships, is designed to provide the student with a sociological back-

ground and with a perspective for the analytical examination of each selection. Each chapter opens with an extended discussion outlining the topic or issue with which the chapter deals and establishing the conceptual and historical setting that is essential to an understanding of the material. Each selection, in turn, is preceded by a similar passage of textual orientation. A summary at the end of each chapter reviews the main points and issues that have been developed. This contextual material amounts to some two hundred pages in all.

An experimental edition of this book was used at the University of Illinois and elsewhere over a period of four years. Classroom experience with that edition led us to add some selections, to lengthen some of the original ones, and to provide the textual setting.

We are indebted to many persons—to so many, indeed, that their contributions can be acknowledged here only by a general expression of gratitude. We are especially obligated to those who passed on to us suggestions based upon their use of the experimental edition. It is our hope that the present volume makes good use of most of these constructive criticisms, although we could not, obviously, take advantage of all of them. Some of the types of materials that were suggested for inclusion are simply not available, and limitations of space have forced us to omit other selections that we should have liked to include. Our thanks go, nevertheless, to all those students and teachers who were kind enough to offer comments and suggestions.

W. O. S.
B. O. S.
K. D. B.
A. W. A.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Social Foundations of Education

Most pupils, parents, and other citizens tend to take for granted the established ways of doing things in the schools of their localities. Because these established ways seem “natural” to them, they seldom ask how any practice in the school has come to be as it is or why it persists—why report cards are used in reporting to parents, for example, why the seats in the classroom are bolted to the floor, or why algebra and English are required in the ninth grade. They seldom ask whether there are alternative arrangements which might serve their educational purposes as well as or better than the present arrangements.

THE STRENGTH OF TRADITION

To most pupils and parents, it seems only “natural” that elementary-school teachers should be female, although they consider it equally “natural” that secondary-school teachers are either male or female. Many teachers, to take another example, consider it “natural” that history is taught in the secondary school, but they would think it quite “unnatural” if psychology were to be introduced. And so it goes for the whole area of school policies and practices—who goes to school, what is taught, how it is taught, how order and discipline are maintained, what it is proper and improper for teachers to do in their spare time, etc.

Of course, people do raise questions about education. Indeed, today’s newspapers and magazines devote a great deal of space to questions and controversies about the operations of the school. But these questions seem—on the surface, at least—to be concerned primarily with methods of teaching. And teachers, too—particularly teachers in training—seem concerned mainly with “*how to teach*” rather than with “*what to teach*.”

Parents and prospective teachers may ask about the best *method* of teaching algebra. But they rarely ask *why* we teach algebra at all. They want to know the best methods for maintaining order in the classroom, but they do not usually inquire about the kind of order that should be maintained.

Underlying all these questions about method are fundamental questions concerning the purpose and scope of the work of the school. Should the school limit itself to imparting knowledge and skills or should it concern itself with molding or modifying the attitudes and the personalities of its students? And if it should concern itself with attitudes and personalities, then what kinds should it seek to develop? If, on the other hand, the school limits itself to the teaching of knowledge and skills, what knowledge and which skills are most important?

Obviously these fundamental questions cannot be answered in terms of method alone. In large part the answers depend upon the specific demands and values of the society of which the school is a part. For, in its very essence, *the school is an institution established by society for the purpose of preparing the young to participate in that society.* Like the family, the church, or the government, the school is a social institution whose fundamental character is determined by the society it serves.

Perhaps it is precisely because the school is a social institution that many people tend to accept it rather uncritically just so long as "it works reasonably well." We do not usually question deeply the operations of any of our institutions—families, businesses, governments—so long as they function smoothly and satisfy at least fairly well the needs they are expected to satisfy. We do not generally perceive alternatives to our established ways of doing and thinking about things so long as we and those we know are generally satisfied with the results. It is not typical of us to see current institutional arrangements as human inventions brought forward to meet what was at some time in the past a novel social demand, a demand made by people dissatisfied with the *status quo*. We do not typically remember, unless we happen to have lived through a period of innovation in social practice, that most of the novel solutions proposed to meet the social demands of the past encountered more or less bitter resistance from people who were satisfied with existing arrangements. We forget the partisan struggles that centered about the innovation and that have deposited some persisting and now familiar social arrangement in our lives, usually as a compromise to settle the conflict between the "old" and the "new." Most of us tend to take our institutional arrangements for granted if these arrangements are seen as satisfying relevant needs. We have only limited historical appreciation of the institutions that pattern our lives. And so it is with the institutions of schooling.

It is somewhat surprising, however, that some members of the teaching profession also take for granted the established ways of the schools they serve. Some teachers find it "natural" that their subject should be taught in schools and that it should be taught in the way in which they are now teaching it. The present way of teaching the subject is sometimes described as "the way it has always been taught," whether "always" actually means five or fifty years. Such teachers tend to resist as somehow "unnatural" demands for changes in the school program, particularly in their part of it, whether these demands

come from groups in the profession or in the public. And they may label such demands for educational changes as either "reactionary" or "radical" without first understanding or evaluating them.

Why is it that teachers sometimes fail to see the patterns of schooling as precipitates of some historical reaction to social demands—often to conflicting demands—upon the education of the younger members of society? Probably it is because there has been a gap in their professional education. They may have been taught, and taught well, in their special subject. They may have been trained, and trained well, in methods of teaching their subject or subjects *within present school arrangements*. But they may not have been taught to see the school as a social institution in all of its complex relationships to the society that supports and controls it. They may not have been taught to see that choices about what to do in school typically reflect wider choices about what to do in the society for which the school is educating the young. They have not been helped to analyze the contemporary society in which they live and teach in terms of its stresses and strains, which generate both professional and public demands for conservation or for change in the aims, methods, content, and organization of the school program. They may not have learned that it is this contemporary society and its emerging future to which they must turn in order to evaluate and to handle understandingly the conflicting social demands made upon the school and upon teachers. In brief, they have not been helped to acquire knowledge and sensitivity about the social foundations of the school, the social institution which in their professional capacities they serve and seek to improve. It is this knowledge and sensitivity which the present book has been designed to provide.

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

As we have already noted, if the institutions which pattern their lives seem to be working well, people generally, unless they have been taught otherwise, tend to take them for granted. If this is true, it may be asked why teachers (as well as students, parents, and other citizens) should not continue to take for granted the present arrangements of the school and why they should not continue to work within this framework. Why should teachers or prospective teachers be asked to analyze the wider social involvements of the school, to question existing patterns of schooling in terms of their appropriateness to the learnings required by young people (and by older people, too) within contemporary society, to consider alternatives to present school policies, plans, and practices? Prospective teachers may well raise such questions about the kind of probing of the social foundations of education that this book undertakes. They may grant readily that this kind of probing is the domain of scholars who want to satisfy some strange curiosity, but they may quite honestly ask, "Isn't such study an impractical pursuit for teachers, who have enough of a job to keep the school going without speculating on how the patterns of schooling came to be as they are or about how they might be different?"

We can assess the validity of this question only by examining the current state of

American society and of the schools in that society. An easy reliance upon traditional ways of doing things as the principal guide to present practice is safe and wise only in a settled and integrated society—one in which significant change occurs very slowly. Our society at the present time is neither settled nor integrated, and it is changing rapidly. Wars, depressions, widespread social unrest, and increasing personal maladjustment testify to its lack of integrity and stability. The evident facts of continuing change are all around us and within us. Many of the readings of this book suggest that the generalization put forward by the philosopher A. N. Whitehead applies with even greater force to our society at midcentury.

Our sociological theories, our political philosophy, our practical maxims of business, our political economy, and our doctrines of education are derived from an unbroken tradition and practical examples from the age of Plato . . . to the end of the last century. The whole of this tradition is warped by the vicious assumption that each generation will substantially live amid the conditions governing the lives of their fathers and will transmit those conditions to mould with equal force the lives of its children. We are living in the first period of human history for which this assumption is false.¹

The *impractical* teacher today, if Whitehead is correct, is the one who makes the "vicious assumption" that the schools of tomorrow will and should operate just as the schools of yesterday operated, who shuts his eyes to the potential as well as the actual demands for changes in schooling which are brewing today—demands generated by the stresses and strains of our confused, uncertain, and changing society. The *practical* teacher, on the other hand, has become aware that the conflicting demands for changes in the schools are generated by the problems and issues of a society that has lost its confident common direction, a society that is being forced to change in some respects all of its major institutions, including the school.

The practical teacher will have understood and assessed the major current views concerning the responsibilities of the school and the teaching profession in a society which is, in significant respects, remaking itself. The practical teacher will have recognized that current proposals for changes in educational goals and policies, whether they come from groups within the profession or outside it, vary in the degree to which they have taken into serious account the larger problems, trends, and choices with which contemporary society is confronted. He will recognize also that the evaluation of these proposals requires a study of the society for which the school educates its students to make with wisdom and intelligence the choices that citizens today are forced to make, whatever their equipment for choosing. The practical teacher will understand that the teaching profession can assume leadership in helping the public make wise choices about necessary changes in the schools only as members of the profession have developed an adequate understanding of the social foundations of their institution, the school.

SOCIAL BASES FOR CHANGES IN THE SCHOOL

If teachers are to be wise in their assessment of social demands for change or conservation in the school program, they must acquire an appreciation of the three elements involved in any demand likely to produce changes in the patterns of schooling.

First, the change is advocated as a way of meeting some social problem or need which is widely recognized as important. The discovery of a large number of illiterates among drafted personnel in the armed forces during and after World War II, for example, created demands for better teaching of reading and writing in the schools. The discovery of a relatively large number of maladjusted personalities in the same population generated demands for emphasis upon mental health in the educational program. Evidence of anti-social attitudes among "juvenile delinquents" releases a clamor for changes in the schooling which has somehow "failed" in character building with these young people. Effective social demands for changes in the schools, then, grow out of more or less widespread awareness of some social problem which it seems that the program of education can and should help to solve. Hence, if he is to understand and assess correctly social demands for changes in the educational program and discipline of the school, the teacher must have studied the principal problem areas in contemporary society.

A *second* element in social demands upon the schools is the feeling that threatened values in the society can be safeguarded, or that potential values not yet fully realized can be realized, if schooling were to pay more attention to these values. Common to all the diverse interest groups in American society today is a concern for the fate and future of democratic values in the world today. Some groups may feel, for example, that the democratic values of cooperation are threatened by or neglected in the schools' stressing of competition for grades, honors, and recognition. They may press for a minimizing of competitive practices in the schools and for an extension of cooperative methods of learning and social control. On the other hand, others may (also in the name of democracy) decry the extension of cooperation and seek to stress competition as favoring the development of the strong individuals democracy needs. The teacher in the school today, if he is to understand and evaluate social demands upon the schools which are undertaken in the name of democracy, must have studied and understood the meaning of democracy in our tradition, along with the principal contemporary issues concerning its interpretation in the modern world.

A *third* element in social demands for changes in schooling stems from the accumulation of new knowledge which has not yet been worked into the practices of the schools but which promises to help in the solution of the problems and in the conservation and extension of the values involved in educational unrest and controversy. This third element is likely to be more potent in the thinking of members of the teaching profession than in the thinking of the general public. One example must suffice here. It seems true that recently acquired knowledge about differences among social classes—differences in ways of life and in ways of rearing children—has never been worked fully into the thinking of teachers and other educational workers or into the practice of American schools. Many

important educational objectives which cannot easily be attained merely through participation in the life of the community. To a considerable extent, the rest of the book, but particularly Parts II and III, elaborate in greater detail, and with specific reference to American society, the general principles outlined in this first part.

Part II—"The School and the Structure of the Community" (Chaps. 4-7)—attempts to clarify the meaning, for education (in its broadest sense) and for the school, of four important elements of the social structure: (1) formal social groups, such as the organized interest group, the family, the classroom, and youth organizations; (2) social-class structure; (3) ethnic-group structure; and (4) welfare levels. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 set forth, in brief form, the essential sociological facts with respect to these four elements of American social structure. They also undertake to suggest some of the more important influences of these basic elements on the personality, attitudes, and behavior of the individual. Chapter 7 points to the impact on the school itself of the class, ethnic-group, and welfare structures.

Part III—"American Ideals and Conflicts and the Social Function of the School" (Chapters 8-12)—is primarily concerned with an examination of the basic issues involved in the current debate over the social role of the school in contemporary American society. The selections in Part III have been chosen on the basis of the premise that the functions of the school, as a social institution, are always determined in some large part by the aspirations, ideals, and problems of the society served by the school. Within this framework Chapter 8 delineates the essential meaning of the American ideals and aspirations as defined by the democratic tradition. Chapter 9 presents the issues embodied in the current controversy about the place of religion in public education. Chapters 10 and 11 explore some of the basic conflicts in American society (in addition to the interest-group, class, and ethnic conflicts examined in Part II). The first part of Chapter 10 attempts to indicate some of the forces behind these conflicts; the last three selections in Chapter 11 underline the problems which these conflicts pose for public education. Finally, in the light of the preceding analysis, Chapter 12 presents six different conceptions of the role of the school in the contemporary social situation.

Part IV—"Social Aspects of School Organization and Pedagogical Method" (Chaps. 13 and 14)—stresses the relationship between social change, ideals, and conditions on the one hand and school organization and pedagogical method on the other hand. Chapter 13 considers four major issues in the social control of the school which grow out of the changes, ideals, and conditions characteristic of American society today. Chapter 14 discusses the fundamental dimensions of the method of teaching which, in the opinion of the editors, should be used in the study of social problems.

Part V—"Social Aspects of the Teaching Profession" (Chapter 15)—is devoted to an examination of the organization, functions, and problems of the teaching profession. In this Part the emphasis shifts from the work of the school and of the teacher in the classroom to the interests and concerns of teachers as an occupational and professional group. Chapter 15 is divided into four sections, which take up in turn (1) the nature of a profession, (2) the major barriers to the attainment of full professional status for the

teacher, (3) the organization and functions of the teaching profession, and (4) three crucial problems of the teaching profession—professional autonomy, academic freedom, and affiliations with organized labor.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

For many of you, this book will be your first introduction to the study of the school from a sociological standpoint, and some of you will have had little or no previous preparation in the social sciences. Hence, a word on the general nature of this book and how you can use it most effectively may be helpful at this point. In general, you will find in it two kinds of readings. The first deals directly with the work of the school. For example, you will find readings describing life in the school, practices of school boards and other officials, the management of the school, and the functions of the school in today's society. The second kind of reading sets forth certain social facts, theories, and ideals which have a significant bearing either on the school itself or on the character and personality of the pupils who go to school and the teachers who teach them. As examples of this type, you will find selections describing the social-class structure in the United States and changes in family life, in occupations, and in technological processes and economic conditions. All selections of this type have been chosen precisely because the social realities they describe do affect the school and those who are in it. But the connection will not always be perceived without some thought. Almost every reading has been chosen with a view to helping you to understand the relation between the social materials and the problems of education. But in many instances, especially if the facts and ideas are unfamiliar to you, you will need to read a passage more than once as you reflect upon its meaning and its significance to you as a teacher.

If you bear in mind that there are two kinds of readings and that those which treat social facts and theories are to be understood in terms of their bearing upon educational problems, you will perceive the purpose of this book—to help you to learn to interpret education and its problems from a sociological standpoint. A great deal of pertinent material has been taken from sociology, political science, and economics. Nevertheless, this is not a book in the social sciences as such. Rather, it is social science applied specifically to education in the United States. You should therefore search carefully for the educational application of each selection.

You will probably find not only that many of the selections are new to you but also that they challenge some of your beliefs and loyalties. It is difficult for anyone to consider calmly facts and theories that call into question beliefs he has long held. Yet the ability to do just that is what the scientific temper demands of us. A famous sociologist has said, "If you wish to understand a man, find out what he takes for granted." It might be said with equal force that the individual's own intellectual development begins in earnest when he is able to question ideas and ideals which he has long been taking for granted. What has been said is not, of course, to be taken as an invitation to discard whatever you believe merely because you have believed it for a long time, or to adopt

new ideas merely because they are new to you. Nevertheless, it is important to learn to examine ideas no matter how much they may conflict with your prejudices, to search out their meanings, and to test them for whatever truth and value they may have.

You will also encounter a considerable number of new words. Every new subject you take up has its own special vocabulary. Sometimes we call the vocabulary "jargon" if we are not familiar with it. The sociological study of education is no exception in this respect. If the new words are introduced in the readings without being defined, you will have to get the meaning from the context—that is, from the sentences and paragraphs in which they appear. If the burden of new words becomes too great, you may find it helpful to list the terms that give you trouble and then make a special study of them or bring them up in class for discussion.

Although the readings in each chapter are taken from a number of authors, each chapter is a closely knit unit. The readings it contains have been selected and organized for the purpose of illuminating a specific problem. The introduction to each chapter provides an overview and indicates the main problem the chapter is designed to deal with. Then all the selections are knit together by connecting paragraphs, and the chapter concludes with a summary of the main points or with a brief reflection upon the significance of the chapter to you as a teacher. Ordinarily you will find it to your advantage to read a chapter through to get the general outline of the discourse. This procedure will help you to see each selection in perspective. After the first reading you may then wish to read again, and as often thereafter as necessary, the various parts of the chapter for more detailed aspects of the treatment.

PART ONE

The School as a Social Institution

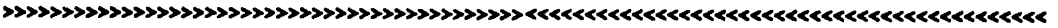
Chapter 2. Education and Culture

Bronislaw Malinowski • Ralph Linton • William H. Kilpatrick •
Margaret Mead • B. Othanel Smith • William O. Stanley •
J. Harlan Shores

Chapter 3. School and Community

J. Crosby Chapman • George S. Counts • Joseph K. Hart •
Robert S. Lynd • Helen M. Lynd • Willard Waller

Education and Culture



Human beings are born into a physical environment, which consists of things and their qualities—earth, water, sky; color, sound, texture; heat, light, and so on *ad infinitum*. Even plants and animals, although we think of them as biological rather than physical, are part of this physical environment too. We have given names to these and other elements of our physical environment, but they existed long before they were named. They existed before man, and they may exist after man has disappeared. The physical environment, then, consists of mere physical entities and qualities rather than the names or the values that man attaches to them.

Human beings are born also into a cultural environment. This environment consists, in part, of the tools, instruments, buildings, and the other material objects which man has *made* out of his physical environment for his comfort and use. It consists, also, of the meanings which we attach to things and their various qualities, together with the knowledge, institutions, social practices, symbolic systems, and all other creations of man. When you think of what man knows, what he thinks he knows; when you think of the objects he has created; when you think of his religion, his political faith, and his associations with his fellows; when you think of all these things and many others too numerous to mention, you are thinking about the cultural environment. In short, the culture consists of the man-made parts of our environment as contrasted with all the objects and things that would exist even if man did not.

If we wish to refer to all the elements of a cultural environment, we use the term *culture* or *cultural system*. We mean, by the culture of a people, all those artifacts, ideas, institutions, social ways, customs, and the like which, taken in their totality, constitute the environment which man himself has made. (Sometimes the word “culture” is used to refer to a specific part of the cultural environment—that which is believed to be of higher quality or greater refinement. This is the meaning that one has in mind when he talks about classical literature, music, and art as representing culture. The term “culture” as used here, however, refers not to the so-called refined parts of the cultural environment but to all parts of it taken together.)

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According to our use of the term, it is permissible to speak of any individual as a cultured person, regardless of the amount and kind of schooling he has received. A person is cultured in the sense that he has taken on the ways of behaving characteristic of the people with whom he associates. He is nurtured by the culture. Without its molding influence, the individual would be a human being only in the biological sense. Like the reputed wolf-children of India, he would behave like the lower animals with which he associated. If we judge from available evidence, he would speak no language, use no tools, express no sense of humor, and often walk on all fours. To be a human being, then, is to be cultured—to have taken on a culture in some degree.

### THE CULTURE AND THE CLASSROOM

Why is the concept of culture important to a teacher? What use can he make of it? Primarily, the concept of culture helps him to understand the purpose of the school. In any society, the school exists for the purpose of inducting the young into the culture. Only as its young take on the customs, traditions, ideas, and other elements of the culture can a society continue to exist. The education of the young in the ways and beliefs of their elders is just as essential to the maintenance of a society as is biological reproduction. For if each generation had to begin anew to work out ways of satisfying its needs, man's development could not rise much above the subhuman level. By the process of passing on the cultural accumulation from one generation to the next, man builds an increasingly rich environment for the nurture of his offspring. Each generation thus has a better opportunity than its predecessor to advance itself to a higher level of social existence. The task of the school is to assist in the process of passing on to the new generation those cultural elements having the greatest promise of contributing to human advancement.

The teacher can educate only as he selects the appropriate elements of the culture and uses them in such ways as to influence the development of the individual. Both materials and methods of instruction are taken from the culture. The statements of fact, laws, theories, and social, moral, and aesthetic norms together with all other elements of school subject matter are selected from the culture. Because there is always a great reservoir of subject matter not used in the school, the teacher may be called upon at any moment to justify his choice among the possible instructional materials.

Methods of teaching and methods of classroom control are also selected from the culture. Just as it contains many different facts, laws, theories, and norms, a culture contains various ways of teaching and of controlling individuals. Although the teacher must always determine which method of control is to be used in a specific case at a specific time, the methods of control that are regularly employed in the discipline of children in the school should be those that are used extensively in society at large. If the teacher understands the relation of the various methods of control to the traditions and aspirations of the people, he is better able to make wise decisions in matters of classroom management and discipline.

It is important for the teacher to know, for example, whether or not reason and persuasion are more highly prized in a society than coercion and punishment. In a society that uses authority and coercion for social control, the teacher will (if he is concerned with preparing his pupils for participation in that society) use authority and coercion in the classroom. On the other hand, in a society that relies upon reason and persuasion, the classroom methods of social control should, logically, also employ reason and persuasion.

Decisions about the control of pupils in the school cannot, then, be made satisfactorily without consideration of their effects upon the character of the pupils. And, within a generation, the character thus produced will affect the system of social controls operating in society. In like fashion, methods of teaching are reflections of the modes of learning and thinking current outside of school, and the stress upon some specific method of teaching will in turn affect the ways in which people subsequently think and learn in their life activities. Thus the school and the culture are inextricably interwoven. The wise teacher will understand not only this relationship but also the basic pattern of the culture in which his pupils must live.

### CULTURAL INFLUENCES UPON PERSONALITY

Every individual is both a biological and a cultural product. The influences shaping his development stem not simply from the genes but also from the cultural inheritance. Because it is only within the last few decades that social scientists have begun to take full account of the impact of culture on the development of individuals, the biological and the cultural influences have often been confused. The prevailing practice has been for man to attribute to biological nature what are in fact the effects of his culture, as we shall see at several points in this chapter. Despite our scientific knowledge of biology and culture, it is still not possible to draw a hard and fast line between those characteristics of an individual that are biological and those that are cultural in origin. Nevertheless, it is now possible to make gross distinctions between these two influences. These distinctions can be made partly as a result of comparative studies of cultures, partly as a result of comparative studies of phases in the development of a specific culture, and partly as a result of psychological investigations of human learning and development.

A few examples of these gross distinctions may help to indicate how cultural influences have often been mistaken for biological ones. In our society it has often been said that man, in his economic activities, is driven by the profit motive. That is to say that an individual will always drive as hard a bargain as he can in order to make the maximum economic gain for himself and that he will continue to strive for more and more gain even though he has everything he needs for his health and comfort. It has been said not only that men in general will strive for gain but also that it is their "nature" to do so—that they cannot do otherwise. But investigations of persons in cultural systems not permeated by Western economic practices and ideas have made it clear that not all men work for gain. When Western businessmen have tried to establish industries in these cultures, they have learned that the people will work only when they have need of food.

They have no desire to acquire wealth as such. The desire for sheer gain is learned; it is acquired from a specific kind of cultural system more or less identified with the Western world of the last three or four hundred years.

It is sometimes said that women are not logical, that their thoughts are less subject to control by the rules of logic, and that they depend more upon intuition and emotions than do men. It is also believed that women are "by nature" so constituted—that they cannot be otherwise. This misconception is often used to rationalize much of the prejudice against the admission of women to the higher professions and to top business and industrial positions. But all of these opinions about women are cultural biases having no factual basis in the nature of women as such. Whether or not women think logically (and there have been and still are outstanding women logicians) depends upon the amount and kind of experience they have had and on the extent of the cultural reinforcement there is for this mode of behavior.

Let us consider another example. Some pupils do not respond favorably to what the teacher tries to teach them. In fact, some of them tend to respond negatively to anything the teacher does in an attempt to interest them in learning. Such behavior has often been interpreted to mean that these pupils lack the ability to learn, that the lack of interest is due to lack of native intelligence. This interpretation is, of course, sometimes valid, but frequently it is in error. What an individual will be interested in, or what he will feel motivated to do, depends largely upon the cultural influences to which he is subjected. If the social groups to which he belongs—his gang, his family, his classmates—prize the things the school attempts to do, then he is more likely to be positively disposed toward the teacher and the school than if these groups are antagonistic or even neutral. This means that many of the differences among individuals are due to the kinds of cultural influences which play upon them. If he is to understand the individuals in his classes, therefore, it is necessary for a teacher to know the cultural roots of these differences.

### SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE SCHOOL

The concept of culture helps the teacher to understand the nature of social change and its relation to the school. Social change is cultural change—that is, change in the cultural system, in the beliefs, ideals, traditions, and practices of a people. Social changes, especially if they are extensive, create many problems for those who are charged with the operation of the schools. When, for example, a culture changes from simple agriculture to complex technology—as has happened within the past century in the United States—the school's responsibility for vocational education increases enormously. Such changes may entail new subject matter, new methods of teaching, and new ways of managing and controlling students in both the school and the classroom. In fact, almost every aspect of the school may be affected by sweeping cultural reforms.

These, then, are some of the questions which the concept of culture will help you to answer:

1. What are the different meanings of the expression "human nature," and how is the work of the teacher related to each?
2. How is the individual influenced by the culture, and how do these influences affect the teacher's work?
3. How does the cultural system itself educate those who live in it?
4. How is the school related to the culture and to cultural change?

The selections that follow have been chosen because they shed light on these questions. The first reading, by Bronislaw Malinowski, is primarily concerned with the distinction, and the relationship, between the biological and the cultural nature of man. In particular, it shows how basic biological needs are shaped by the culture into distinct patterns of behavior. The second and third selections deal with the influence of culture and of social structure on character and personality. Margaret Mead's comparison between growing up in Samoa and growing up in contemporary America undertakes to point up the influence of culture on persons by means of contrast. The final reading in the chapter indicates, both by examples and by generalizations, how social change requires corresponding changes in education, in and out of school.

Most of the questions raised in this chapter will be treated in considerable detail in terms of our own society later in the book. In this chapter we are concerned with the general ways in which culture affects both the individual and the school.

## *I • Human Nature: Biological and Cultural*

Every teacher has some conception of human nature, and he will often use this conception to justify an educational policy or practice. Some teachers conceive of human nature as fixed, unalterable, and biologically determined. Thus, some teachers have been known to defend competitive athletics and competitive examinations and marking systems by asserting that human beings are "by nature" competitive and that such competition calls out the maximum effort of every pupil. Other teachers have defended cooperative activities and projects by arguing that cooperation brings out the best in each pupil because individuals "naturally" desire mutual aid. Both these arguments make the same assumption: that there are traits of behavior fixed in human nature and thus not capable of change. The two arguments differ only with respect to the traits they attribute to man's nature.

Most modern teachers view human nature as a combination and interaction of cultural influences and native potentialities. They recognize that, although man's physical structure—his forebrain, his vocal cords, his erect stature, his thumb, etc.—differentiates him from the lower animals, he is nevertheless an animal who shares with other animals certain basic needs that require satisfaction if he is to survive as an individual or as a



species. But, according to this view, human nature as a whole is a product of the interaction between this biological nature and cultural forces. Some ways of behaving are learned alike by virtually every member of society. Almost all of us come to speak the language of the group, to dress as the other members dress, to share the group's taboos, and so on. Thus, man's biological nature comes to be overlaid with a cultural nature from which social behavior, motivations, and aspirations are derived within a setting of social influences.

In the following passage, Bronislaw Malinowski, an anthropologist who has studied and compared the cultures of a number of primitive peoples, discusses the concept of human nature from both the biological and the cultural standpoints. He explores questions close to the concerns of every teacher. Are there native needs and impulses? What happens to these in a cultural system? Are some needs learned? (Note that in this passage Malinowski uses the term "human nature" in two senses: he speaks of biological human nature and cultural human nature.)

On the basis of Malinowski's analysis, can we conclude that the teacher builds needs as well as teaches the pupil how to satisfy needs? From this study we can acquire a clearer concept of human nature so that we shall be better able to recognize behavior that is due largely to cultural influences and to determine the steps that a teacher can take to change these influences and in consequence the behavior of his pupils.

We have to base our theory of culture on the fact that all human beings belong to an animal species. Man as an organism must exist under conditions which not only secure survival, but also allow of healthy and normal metabolism. No culture can continue if the group is not replenished continually and normally. Otherwise, obviously, the culture will perish through the progressive dying out of the group. Certain minimum conditions are thus imposed on all groups of human beings, and on all individual organisms within the group. We can define the term "human nature" by the fact that all men have to eat, they have to breathe, to sleep, to procreate, and to eliminate waste matter from their organisms wherever they live and whatever type of civilization they practice.

By human nature, therefore, we mean the biological determinism which imposes on

every civilization and on all individuals in it the carrying out of such bodily functions as breathing, sleep, rest, nutrition, excretion, and reproduction. We can define the concept of basic needs as the environmental and biological conditions which must be fulfilled for the survival of the individual and the group. Indeed, the survival of both requires the maintenance of a minimum of health and vital energy necessary for the performance of cultural tasks, and for the minimum numbers necessary for the prevention of gradual depopulation.

We have already indicated that the concept of need is merely the first approach to the understanding of organized human behavior. It has been several times suggested that not even the simplest need, nor yet the physiological function most independent of environmental influences, can be regarded as com-

pletely unaffected by culture. Nevertheless, there are certain activities determined biologically, by the physics of the environment and by human anatomy, which are invariably incorporated in each type of civilization.

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So far we have learned that human nature imposes on all forms of behavior, however complex and highly organized, a certain determinism. This consists of a number of vital sequences,<sup>1</sup> indispensable to the healthy run of the organism and to the community as a whole, which must be incorporated in each traditional system of organized behavior. These vital sequences constitute crystallizing points for a number of cultural processes, products, and complex arrangements which are built around each sequence.

\* \* \*

Let us now consider how impulses, activities, and satisfactions actually occur within a cultural setting. As for the impulse, it is clear that in every human society each impulse is remolded by tradition. It appears still in its dynamic form as a drive, but a drive modified, shaped, and determined by tradition. In the case of breathing, this occurs within enclosed spaces, a house, a cave, a mine, or a factory. We could say that there is a compromise between the need for oxygen in the lungs and the need for integral protection during sleep, work, or social gathering. The requirements of temperature and of ventilation have to be met by cultural devices. In this a certain traditional adjustment or habituation of the organism takes place. It is a well-known fact that even in European cultures, the emphasis on fresh air as against level of temperature is not identical in England, Germany, Italy and Russia. Another complication in this simple impulse of air intake to fill the lungs with oxygen is due to the fact that the organs of breathing are also, to a large extent, organs of speech. A compromise, an adjustment of deep breathing to performances

in public oratory, the recital of magical formulae, and singing, constitutes another domain in which cultural breathing differs from the mere physiological act. The interaction between beliefs, magical, religious, and connected with etiquette, and breathing, would supply another co-determinant to that of physiology in cultures where the exhalation of breath, especially at close quarters, is regarded as dangerous, impolite, or noxious, while the deep, noisy intake of breath is a sign of respect or submission.

Cultural determination is a familiar fact as regards hunger or appetite, in short, the readiness to eat. Limitations of what is regarded as palatable, admissible, ethical; the magical, religious, hygienic and social taboos on quality, raw material, and preparation of food; the habitual routine establishing the time and the type of appetite—all these could be exemplified from our own civilization, from the rules and principles of Judaism or Islam, Brahminism or Shintoism, as well as from every primitive culture. The sex appetite, persistent and invariably allowed within limitations, is also hedged round by the strictest prohibitions, as in incest, temporary abstinences, and vows of chastity, temporary or permanent. Celibacy obviously eliminates—at least as an ideal demand—the sexual relations from certain minorities within a culture. As a permanent rule, it clearly never occurs for a community as a whole. The specific form in which the sexual impulse is allowed to occur is deeply modified by anatomical inroads (circumcision, infibulation, clitoridectomy, breast, foot, and face lacerations); the attractiveness of a sex object is affected by economic status and rank; and the integration of the sex impulse involves the personal desirability of a mate as an individual and as a member of the group. It would be equally easy to show that fatigue, somnolence, thirst, and restlessness are determined by such cultural factors as a call to duty, the urgency of a task, the established rhythm of activities. Similar factors obviously also affect bladder and colon pressure and impulses of pain and fear. As for pain, indeed, it would seem that most of the elementary invariants of cultural history and

<sup>1</sup> Vital sequences, as Malinowski uses the phrase, refers to the rhythm of impulse, act, satisfaction engendered by basic physiological needs. [Editors' note.]

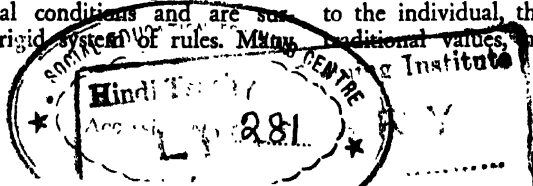
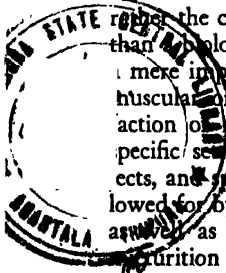
ethnographic data prove that resistance and endurance can be almost indefinitely increased by changes in the central system achieved through religious enthusiasm, the heroism of a patriot, or the model determination of a Puritan.

In short, it would be idle to disregard the fact that the impulse leading to the simplest physiological performance is as highly plastic and determined by tradition as it is ineluctable in the long run, because it is determined by physiological necessities. We see also why simple physiological impulses can not exist under conditions of culture. Breathing has somehow to be combined with vocal performances, with confinement within the same space of several people, and activities in which air is affected by noxious or poisonous gases. Eating, under conditions of culture, is not the mere resort to environmental supplies, but something in which human beings partake of prepared food which, as a rule, has been for some time accumulated and stored, and which invariably is the result of an organized differential activity of a group, even when this occurs in the simplest form of collecting. Eating in common implies conditions as to quantity, habit, and manner, and thus derives a number of rules of commensalism. Conjugation in the human species is not an act to be performed anywhere, anyhow, without consideration of the feelings or reactions of others. Conjugation in public is, in fact, extremely rare, and occurs either as a direct deviation from the norms of the society as a form of sexual perversion, or, very rarely, as a part of a complex magical or mystical ceremony. In such cases, it becomes rather the cultural use of a physiological fact than a biologically determined satisfaction of a mere impulse. The act of resting, sleep, of muscular nervous activity, and the satisfaction of restlessness, invariably demand a specific setting, a physical apparatus of objects, and special conditions arranged and allowed for by the community. In the simplest, as well as in highly complex civilizations, nutrition and defecation are performed under very special conditions and are surrounded by a rigid system of rules. Many

primitives, for reasons of magic and in fear of sorcery, as well as because of their ideas of dangers emanating from human excreta, impose stricter rules of privacy and isolation than we find even in civilized Europe. In all this, we are showing how the very act, that is, the core of a vital sequence, is also regulated, defined, and thus modified by culture.

The same refers, obviously, to the third phase in a vital sequence, that of satisfaction. This, once more, can not be defined merely in terms of physiology, although physiology supplies us with the minimum definition. Satiety is undoubtedly a condition of the human organism. But an Australian aborigine who had by mistake satisfied his hunger by eating his totemic animal, an orthodox Jew who, through a mishap, had eaten pork to satiety, a Brahmin forced to eat the flesh of a cow, would one and all develop symptoms of a physiological nature, vomiting, digestive disturbances, symptoms of the illness specifically believed to be the sanction in the case of breach. The satisfaction reached by a sexual act in which the incest taboo is broken or adultery committed or the sacred vows of chastity defied produces once more an organic effect determined by cultural values. This proves that in cultural behavior we must not forget biology, but we can not rest satisfied with biological determinism alone. In regard to breathing, we might mention the very widespread belief in "evil effluvia," or dangerous atmosphere, typified in the Italian expression *mal aria*, which refers, as a rule, not to actually dangerous volatile substances, but to culturally determined categories, which produce, nevertheless, pathological results.

We see, therefore, that the bald, merely physiological consideration embodied in our table of vital sequences is a necessary point of departure, but it is not sufficient when we consider the way in which man satisfies his bodily urges under cultural conditions. In the first place, it is clear that, taking an organized human group as a whole, a culture and the people who exercise it conjointly, we have to consider each vital sequence with reference to the individual, the organized group, the additional values, norms, and beliefs, and



also the artificial environment in which most of the urges are satisfied. The concept of drive is better omitted from any analysis of human behavior, unless, that is, we understand that we have to use it differently from the animal psychologists or physiologists. Since a conceptual differentiation is always best terminologically differentiated, we shall speak henceforth of motive, meaning by this the urge as it actually is found in operation within a given culture. We have, however, to reformulate our concept of that physiological minimum, the limits within which physiological motivations can be refashioned so that they still do not force organic degeneration or

depopulation upon the members of a culture. As opposed to motive, therefore, we speak of needs. This term we shall predicate not with reference to an individual organism, but rather for the community and its culture as a whole. By need, then, I understand the system of conditions in the human organism, in the cultural setting, and in the relation of both to the natural environment, which are sufficient and necessary for the survival of group and organism. A need, therefore, is the limiting set of facts. Habits and their motivations, the learned responses and the foundations of organization, must be so arranged as to allow the basic needs to be satisfied.

## 2 • The Significance of Status and Role in the Molding of Persons

Thus far we have discussed culture rather generally, without regard to precisely what it consists of. Actually, there are a number of levels of culture. We can speak, for example, of the Judeo-Christian culture, of Western European and American culture, of American culture, of Midwestern or Southern culture, and even of the culture of academic or other occupational groups. Almost every individual has had some experience with each of these levels of culture, but the precise nature of this experience differs for each individual and is largely determined by his position in society—by who he is, where he lives, and what he does.

People are always organized in some way. This is partly what is meant by saying that man exists in a society, that he simply does not live alone. Because his associations with others are always arranged in a particular order, it is possible to speak of a *social structure*. In one sense, the social structure is made up of positions which individuals occupy. Thus in the family there are such positions as the head of the family and the assistant head (in Western society, the mother); then follow in order the oldest child, the next in age, and so on to the youngest. In industry there are the positions of president of the corporation, vice-presidents, and so on down to shop foremen and workers. In schools there are the positions of superintendent, principal, heads of departments, teachers, and students.

Each position, or *status*, in the social structure is occupied by one or more individuals. Further, most individuals usually occupy some position in more than one institution—that is, a man may be a worker in industry and head of a family. Each of these positions has its appropriate *role*—that is to say, the pattern of behavior and expectations

attached to the position by the culture. As they play their roles in these positions, individuals are shaped and molded by the culture. But as each of these positions and roles is different, individuals inevitably learn the culture in somewhat different ways. Thus, we see things from the vantage points of our positions in the social structure. For this reason, different individuals and groups often develop sharp differences of opinion about how things are and about how they ought to be.

The fact that individuals participate in the cultural system in terms of the positions they occupy is of especial importance to the teacher. Knowledge of this fact enables him to understand why his pupils hold many of the views they express and why the ideas of parents often seem quite incomprehensible when viewed from the vantage point of the teacher. In the following passage, Ralph Linton, a distinguished student of society, analyzes the effect of social position upon the individual and his development.

It has been emphasized in previous chapters that societies rather than individuals are the functional units in our species' struggle for existence and that it is societies as wholes which are the bearers and perpetuators of cultures. It has also been pointed out that no one individual is ever familiar with the total culture of his society, still less required to express all its manifold patterns in his overt behavior. However, the participation of any given individual in the culture of his society is not a matter of chance. It is determined primarily, and almost completely as far as the overt culture is concerned, by his place in the society and by the training which he has received in anticipation of his occupying this place. It follows that the behavior of the individual must be studied not simply in relation to the total culture of his society but also in relation to the particular cultural demands which his society makes upon him because of his place in it. Thus all societies expect different behavior from men and from women, and one cannot understand the behavior of any particular man or woman without knowing what these expectations are.

Up to this point we have been dealing with culture participation in the general, impersonal terms of social structure. We must turn now to the individual in his relation to this structure and, through it, to the culture of his society. It should be clear by this time that the structure of even the simplest primary society, such as a primitive village, is by no means simple or homogeneous. The individuals who compose such a society are classified and organized in several different ways simultaneously. Each of these systems has its own functions as regards relating the individual to culture, and he occupies a place within each of them. Thus every member of the society has a place in the age-sex system and also in the prestige series. He has a place in the system of specialized occupations, either as a specialist or as a member of the unassigned residue which, in our own society, is designated by such vague terms as *unskilled laborer* or *housewife*. Lastly, he always belongs to some family unit and to one or more association groups. As long as he has a single living relative within the society, he has position in the family system; and even if all his kindred have been swept away, he can reënter the system by the road of adoption or

[From Ralph Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1945, pp. 55, 75-82. Used by permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.]

marriage. As regards membership in the system based on association, any member of a primary society who is not psychotic can hardly fail to be included in friendship units and work groups. He may be debarred from belonging to clubs or other of the more formal association groupings, but even so he occupies a very definite place in the system of which such groups are a part. He is one of the "outsiders," and it is the presence of this group which provides the "members" with most of their emotional satisfaction. It is inconceivable that a secret society could exist without a large audience of nonmembers to envy the members and speculate about the secrets.

In past attempts to clarify the relation of the individual to these multiple social systems, two terms have proved so useful that it seems justifiable to introduce them here. We have tried to make it clear that the systems persist while the individuals who occupy places within them may come and go. The place in a particular system which a certain individual occupies at a particular time will be referred to as his *status* with respect to that system. The term *position* has been used by some other students of social structure in much the same sense, but without clear recognition of the time factor or of the existence of simultaneous systems of organization within the society. *Status* has long been used with reference to the position of an individual in the prestige system of his society. In the present usage this is extended to apply to his position in each of the other systems. The second term, *rôle*, will be used to designate the sum total of the culture patterns associated with a particular status. It thus includes the attitudes, values and behavior ascribed by the society to any and all persons occupying this status. It can even be extended to include the legitimate expectations of such persons with respect to the behavior toward them of persons in other statuses within the same system. Every status is linked with a particular rôle, but the two things are by no means the same from the point of view of the individual. His statuses are ascribed to him on the basis of his age and sex, his birth or marriage into a par-

ticular family unit, and so forth. His rôles are learned on the basis of his statuses, either current or anticipated. In so far as it represents overt behavior, a rôle is the dynamic aspect of a status: what the individual has to do in order to validate his occupation of the status.

A particular status within a social system can be occupied, and its associated rôle known and exercised, by a number of individuals simultaneously. In fact, this is the normal condition. Thus every society ordinarily includes several persons who occupy the status of adult male and adhere to the adult male rôle. It similarly includes a number of persons who occupy the status of father in the organizations of the particular family groups to which they belong. Conversely, the same individual can and does occupy simultaneously a series of statuses each of which derives from one of the systems of organization in which he participates. He not only occupies these statuses, but he also knows the rôles pertaining to them. However, he can never exercise all these rôles simultaneously.

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This formulation can be made clearer by an example. Let us suppose that a man spends the day working as clerk in a store. While he is behind the counter, his active status is that of a clerk, established by his position in our society's system of specialized occupations. The rôle associated with this status provides him with patterns for his relations with customers. These patterns will be well known both to him and to the customers and will enable them to transact business with a minimum of delay or misunderstanding. When he retires to the rest room for a smoke and meets other employees there, his clerk status becomes latent and he assumes another active status based upon his position in the association group composed of the store's employees as a whole. In this status his relations with other employees will be governed by a different set of culture patterns from those employed in his relations with customers. Moreover, since he probably knows most of the other employees, his exercise of these cul-

ture patterns will be modified by his personal likes and dislikes of certain individuals and by considerations of their and his own relative positions in the prestige series of the store association's members. When closing time comes, he lays aside both his clerk and store association statuses and, while on the way home, operates simply in terms of his status with respect to the society's age-sex system. Thus if he is a young man he will at least feel that he ought to get up and give his seat to a lady, while if he is an old one he will be quite comfortable about keeping it. As soon as he arrives at his house, a new set of statuses will be activated. These statuses derive from the kinship ties which relate him to various members of the family group. In pursuance of the rôles associated with these family statuses he will try to be cordial to his mother-in-law, affectionate to his wife and a stern disciplinarian to Junior, whose report card marks a new low. If it happens to be lodge night, all his familial statuses will become latent at about eight o'clock. As soon as he enters the lodge room and puts on his uniform as Grand Imperial Lizzard in the Ancient Order of Dinosaurs he assumes a new status, one which has been latent since the last lodge meeting, and performs in terms of its rôle until it is time for him to take off his uniform and go home.

The fact that the individual's various statuses are activated at different times prevents a head-on collision between the rôles associated with them. At most, the overt behavior which is part of the rôle connected with one status may negate the results of the overt behavior which is part of another rôle. The behaviors themselves will not conflict because of the time differential. Moreover, the rôles associated with the statuses within a single system are usually fairly well adjusted to one another and produce no conflicts as long as the individual is operating within this system. This also holds for statuses within different systems whenever these statuses are of such a sort that they normally converge upon the same individuals. Thus in any society the rôles of adult male, of father, of craft specialist, of friend, and so on, will normally be ad-

justed to one another in spite of the different systems from which they derive.

In the rare cases in which, through some accident, statuses whose rôles are fundamentally incompatible converge upon the same individual, we have the material of high tragedy. While most societies feel little sympathy for the individual who is trying to escape the performance of certain of his rôles, all can sympathize with the dilemma of a person who must choose between statuses and rôles which are equally valid. Such dilemmas are a favorite theme in the literature of the more sophisticated or introspective societies. The tragedy of the House of Oedipus and the closing episodes of the *Nibelungenlied* are classical examples, while at the level of simpler folklore we have the Scottish story of the man who finds himself host to his brother's murderer. In each of these cases the individual upon whom the incompatible rôles converge meets the problem by the familiar pattern of operating in terms of different statuses at different times, even though recognizing that the associated rôles will, in their performance, negate each other's results. Thus in the Scottish story the brother, as host, conducts the murderer safely beyond clan territory then, as brother to the victim, engages him in combat to the death.

Such conflicts rarely arise in primary societies or even within larger social groupings which have persisted for some time and developed well-integrated cultures. However, they may become fairly frequent under the conditions existing in our current society. Under the necessity of reorganizing our social structure to meet the needs of a new technology and of a spatial mobility unparalleled in human history, our inherited system of statuses and rôles is breaking down; while a new system, compatible with the actual conditions of modern life, has not yet emerged. The individual thus finds himself frequently confronted by situations in which he is uncertain both of his own statuses and rôles and of those of others. He is not only compelled to make choices but also can feel no certainty

that he has chosen correctly and that the reciprocal behavior of others will be that which he anticipates on the basis of the statuses which he has assumed that they occupy. This results in numerous disappointments and frustrations.

### 3 • *Culture and the Individual*

In the preceding selections we noted that the same needs are transmuted into quite different patterns of behavior, depending upon the cultural system and the social status of the individual. This process goes on in every individual from birth to death, but it is especially active and significant during childhood. In the following paragraphs, William H. Kilpatrick, a pioneer in modern educational philosophy, sets forth some of the ways in which the culture of any society affects the child and his development.

The teacher occupied as he is with the formal means of education at his disposal, needs to be reminded constantly that most of the learning of an individual is incidental to the process of growing up and living in a cultural system. The individual can no more escape the molding influence of the system than he can get out of his skin. To live at all is to imbibe the ways of those with whom one lives. Such incidental learnings far exceed in amount all those which the school fosters by its formal procedures and programs. There is good reason to suppose also that these learnings seriously influence the effectiveness of the school in its efforts to shape the behavior of individuals at all levels of the educational ladder.

To understand . . . the dependence of the individual upon the culture for what he thinks and values as well as for what he mostly does in outward fashion, consider the facts of the infant's growth in life after his start at birth. Each human is born into a group possessed of its peculiar culture and occupying its specific habitat. While the respective cultures of any two neighboring groups may have many similarities, they will if examined closely enough show many significant differences. So the child at birth has awaiting all about him a peculiar culture in actual use by the members of the family and the community into which he is born. His helplessness makes their care of him absolutely necessary not only to his well-being, but even to his continued existence. At least in his early years, he must live with others and upon others if he is to live at all. These pregnant conditions of life bring it about that each normal child learns at least the more elemental culture of his group. He must eat the food they offer, prepared after their manner, and served as they serve it. Similarly, he learns to dress as they dress and talk as they talk. He engages in their festival days and accepts their manners, their standards, and their



ideals. What happens when the group culture has no single or uniform pattern to be accepted we shall later discuss, but where the group culture is homogeneous and self-consistent the child by the very fact of growing up in the group and sharing in its life acquires its distinctive culture.

The fact that the growing child thus learns the culture of his group is so significant for educational theory and for the building of the individual, that we must dwell upon it further, looking more closely at the process by which this learning takes place and sensing more intimately how far-reaching are the effects of the learning upon the very selfhood of the learner.

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The child . . . interacts, of necessity . . . with his family environment. His life depends on it. He must then participate in the family life going on around him. What the family counts important for him, he must take account of; his helplessness insures it. The family's values become his values. The joint effects of opportunity offered and of approval bestowed or withheld are well-nigh irresistible to the growing child. His learning thus follows the family pattern. As he grows older, similar learning of a larger pattern is continually repeated in larger community situations. To share in what seems the supremely important things going on in community life, to find opportunities thus opened up for expanding personal powers, to feel the approval of others and of self in worthy work well done—these are the social processes that result in the learner's acceptance of the group ways and standards as his ways and his standards. And having once accepted them, they grow the stronger in him as he in turn upholds them before those who are younger than he. Anyone who has seen the insistence of a three-year-old on his chance-learned variant of a nursery rhyme can understand somewhat of the insistence of tribe members upon their peculiar tribal ways. Anything else is to them simply unthinkable. How any-

thing different can be learned, we shall later consider. But meanwhile the rule holds. The child learns the group ways. Outwardly he behaves in the fashion upheld by the group culture. Inwardly, he thinks the group thoughts, feels the group values, accepts the group standards, and thus becomes the group-type person. His very self is built on the group model—and he approves. If willing be not too strong a term to use, he wills it so.

What has just been said does not mean that any known culture is so wisely and so consistently built as to cause no individual resistance to its appropriation. A certain culture may have been built to satisfy its adult men with the result that its women and children are more or less sacrificed or exploited to this male cultural model. Or again, the folkways may prove hard to learn, or may be inconsistent, having taught one way for a certain age and then requiring a contrary way later. . . . In such cases what we call personality maladjustment may easily result. Habits set up in obedience to one set of demands conflict with habits of another set. The individual is torn within, unhappy, and emotionally unstable.

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It is perhaps in connection with internal resistances that individuality is most truly built, individuality in the sense that the self knows its will, knows why, and will insist within limits upon its way. The words, "within limits," perhaps tell the story best. Individuality is not mere stubborn insistence, at least not individuality of the better kind. The better kind is conscious of its own wishes but is also conscious of proper limits and what is involved in both. Building one's individuality in this better sense may well begin at the mother's breast, for instance, to stop feeding when one has enough. Wherever there is outside pressure and inner opposition, there is opportunity for intelligent individuality to build itself further into being. The process is unending.

#### 4 • Cultural Contrast: Growing Up in Samoa and America

The cultural influences upon the child in America contrast sharply with those of the simple society of Samoa. American culture, compared to that of Samoa, is extremely heterogeneous. It is marked by a bewildering array of conflicting choices and often by contradictory beliefs about morals, religion, politics, economics, and social practices. Furthermore, it often places strong pressures upon the child to conform to one or more of these cultural alternatives. Thus, the emotional load which American society places upon its children is much heavier than the load which the children of simpler societies are expected to bear—a fact which is sometimes cited to account for the comparatively large number of maladjusted children in American society.

At the same time that American society places upon its children the burden of choosing among alternatives, and in some cases of conforming to conflicting demands, it robs the child of the very experiences that he needs to make wise choices with equanimity. It robs him by preventing him from having experiences with the basic facts of life—sex, pregnancy, birth, death, and the struggle for food, clothing, and shelter—and the harsh realities of social relations in an impersonal society. The boy and girl in American society, unlike their Samoan counterparts, are practically shut out of meaningful participation in the activities of adults. This means, among other things, that the educational effect of the culture is reduced, since it is through participation in adult activities as well as those of children that the culture is incorporated into the personality. The educational burden of the school is consequently increased.

If we are to understand his development we must examine the child's *peer groups*—that is, the social groups whose members are approximately the same age as he and in which he acquires his socialization. Only in a society in which children and youth are forced to associate mainly with one another would the peer group have the importance that it has attained in our society.

In the following pages, Margaret Mead, an anthropologist especially noted for her comparative studies of the effects of the culture upon child development, compares the American boy and girl with their Samoan counterparts in the process of growing up. It is clear from this comparative account of children and youth in the two societies that many of the educational problems encountered by the American teacher would not arise in Samoa. This fact points up the importance of thinking about educational problems in cultural terms. The teacher who recognizes, for example, that the stresses and strains of the adolescent are due to the emotional tensions engendered by cultural alternatives and the resulting conflicts and uncertainties would be displaying the sort of insight into adolescent behavior which the following passage facilitates.

For many chapters we have followed the lives of Samoan girls, watched them change from babies to baby-tenders, learn to make the oven and weave fine mats, forsake the life of the gang to become more active members of the household, defer marriage through as many years of casual love-making as possible, finally marry and settle down to rearing children who will repeat the same cycle. As far as our material permitted, an experiment has been conducted to discover what the process of development was like in a society very different from our own. Because the length of human life and the complexity of our society did not permit us to make our experiment here, to choose a group of baby girls and bring them to maturity under conditions created for the experiment, it was necessary to go instead to another country where history had set the stage for us.

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The background of these differences is a broad one, with two important components; one is due to characteristics which are Samoan, the other to characteristics which are primitive.

The Samoan background which makes growing up so easy, so simple a matter, is the general casualness of the whole society. For Samoa is a place where no one plays for very high stakes, no one pays very heavy prices, no one suffers for his convictions or fights to the death for special ends. Disagreements between parent and child are settled by the child's moving across the street, between a man and his village by the man's removal to the next village, between a husband and his wife's seducer by a few fine mats. Neither poverty nor great disasters threaten the people to make them hold their lives dearly and tremble for continued existence. No implacable gods, swift to anger and strong to punish, disturb the even tenor of their days. Wars and cannibalism are long since passed away and now the greatest cause for tears, short of death itself, is a journey of a relative to another island. No one is hurried along in life or punished harshly for slowness of devel-

opment. Instead the gifted, the precocious, are held back, until the slowest among them have caught the pace. And in personal relations, caring is as slight. Love and hate, jealousy and revenge, sorrow and bereavement, are all matters of weeks. From the first months of its life, when the child is handed carelessly from one woman's hands to another's, the lesson is learned of not caring for one person greatly, not setting high hopes on any one relationship.

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And next there is the most striking way in which all isolated primitive civilisations and many modern ones differ from our own, in the number of choices which are permitted to each individual. Our children grow up to find a world of choices dazzling their unaccustomed eyes. In religion they may be Catholics, Protestants, Christian Scientists, Spiritualists, Agnostics, Atheists, or even pay no attention at all to religion. This is an unthinkable situation in any primitive society not exposed to foreign influence. There is one set of gods, one accepted religious practice, and if a man does not believe, his only recourse is to believe less than his fellows; he may scoff but there is no new faith to which he may turn. Present-day Manu'a approximates this condition; all are Christians of the same sect. There is no conflict in matters of belief although there is a difference in practice between Church-members and non-Church-members. And it was remarked that in the case of several of the growing girls the need for choice between these two practices may some day produce a conflict. But at present the Church makes too slight a bid for young unmarried members to force the adolescent to make any decision.

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Our young people are faced by a series of different groups which believe different things and advocate different practices, and to each of which some trusted friend or relative may belong. So a girl's father may be a Presbyterian, an imperialist, a vegetarian, a

tee-totaler, with a strong literary preference for Edmund Burke, a believer in the open shop and a high tariff, who believes that woman's place is in the home, that young girls should wear corsets, not roll their stockings, not smoke, nor go riding with young men in the evening. But her mother's father may be a Low Episcopalian, a believer in high living, a strong advocate of States' Rights and the Monroe Doctrine, who reads Rabelais, likes to go to musical shows and horse races. Her aunt is an agnostic, an ardent advocate of woman's rights, an internationalist who rests all her hopes on Esperanto, is devoted to Bernard Shaw, and spends her spare time in campaigns of anti-vivisection. Her elder brother, whom she admires exceedingly, has just spent two years at Oxford. He is an Anglo-Catholic, an enthusiast concerning all things mediaeval, writes mystical poetry, reads Chesterton, and means to devote his life to seeking for the lost secret of mediaeval stained glass. Her mother's younger brother is an engineer, a strict materialist, who never recovered from reading Haeckel in his youth; he scorns art, believes that science will save the world, scoffs at everything that was said and thought before the nineteenth century, and ruins his health by experiments in the scientific elimination of sleep. Her mother is of a quietistic frame of mind, very much interested in Indian philosophy, a pacifist, a strict non-participator in life, who in spite of her daughter's devotion to her will not make any move to enlist her enthusiasms. And this may be within the girl's own household. Add to it the groups represented, defended, advocated by her friends, her teachers, and the books which she reads by accident, and the list of possible enthusiasms, of suggested allegiances, incompatible with one another, becomes appalling.

The Samoan girl's choices are far otherwise. Her father is a member of the Church and so is her uncle. Her father lives in a village where there is good fishing, her uncle in a village where there are plenty of cocoanut crabs. Her father is a good fisherman and in his house there is plenty to eat; her uncle is a talking chief and his frequent presents of

bark cloth provide excellent dance dresses. Her paternal grandmother, who lives with her uncle, can teach her many secrets of healing; her maternal grandmother, who lives with her mother, is an expert weaver of fans. The boys in her uncle's village are admitted younger into the *Aumaga* and are not much fun when they come to call; but there are three boys in her own village whom she likes very much. And her great dilemma is whether to live with her father or her uncle, a frank, straightforward problem which introduces no ethical perplexities, no question of impersonal logic. Nor will her choice be taken as a personal matter, as the American girl's allegiance to the views of one relative might be interpreted by her other relatives. The Samoans will be sure she chose one residence rather than the other for perfectly good reasons, the food was better, she had a lover in one village, or she had quarrelled with a lover in the other village. In each case she was making concrete choices within one recognised pattern of behaviour. She was never called upon to make choices involving an actual rejection of the standards of her social group, such as the daughter of Puritan parents, who permits indiscriminate caresses, must make in our society.

And not only are our developing children faced by a series of groups advocating different and mutually exclusive standards, but a more perplexing problem presents itself to them. Because our civilisation is woven of so many diverse strands, the ideas which any one group accepts will be found to contain numerous contradictions. So if the girl has given her allegiance whole-heartedly to some one group and has accepted in good faith their asseverations that they alone are right and all other philosophies of life are Antichrist and anathema, her troubles are still not over. While the less thoughtful receives her worst blows in the discovery that what father thinks is good, grandfather thinks is bad, and that things which are permitted at home are banned at school, the more thoughtful child has subtler difficulties in store for her. If she has philosophically accepted the fact that there are several standards among which she

must choose, she may still preserve a childlike faith in the coherence of her chosen philosophy. Beyond the immediate choice which was so puzzling and hard to make, which perhaps involved hurting her parents or alienating her friends, she expects peace. But she has not reckoned with the fact that each of the philosophies with which she is confronted is itself but the half-ripened fruit of compromise. If she accept Christianity, she is immediately confused between the Gospel teachings concerning peace and the value of human life and the Church's whole-hearted acceptance of war. The compromise made seventeen centuries ago between the Roman philosophy of war and domination, and the early Church doctrine of peace and humility, is still present to confuse the modern child. If she accepts the philosophic premises upon which the Declaration of Independence of the United States was founded, she finds herself faced with the necessity of reconciling the belief in the equality of man and our institutional pledges of equality of opportunity with our treatment of the Negro and the Oriental. The diversity of standards in present-day society is so striking that the dullest, the most incurious, cannot fail to notice it. And this diversity is so old, so embodied in semi-solutions, in those compromises between different philosophies which we call Christianity, or democracy, or humanitarianism, that it baffles the most intelligent, the most curious, the most analytical.

So for the explanation of the lack of poignancy in the choices of growing girls in Samoa, we must look to the temperament of the Samoan civilisation which discounts strong feeling. But for the explanation of the lack of conflict we must look principally to the difference between a simple, homogeneous primitive civilisation, a civilisation which changes so slowly that to each generation it appears static, and a motley, diverse, heterogeneous modern civilisation.

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Samoa's lack of difficult situations, of conflicting choice, of situations in which fear or pain or anxiety are sharpened to a knife edge

will probably account for a large part of the absence of psychological maladjustment. Just as a low-grade moron would not be hopelessly handicapped in Samoa, although he would be a public charge in a large American city, so individuals with slight nervous instability have a much more favourable chance in Samoa than in America. Furthermore the amount of individualisation, the range of variation, is much smaller in Samoa. Within our wider limits of deviation there are inevitably found weak and non-resistant temperaments. And just as our society shows a greater development of personality, so also it shows a larger proportion of individuals who have succumbed before the complicated exactions of modern life.

Nevertheless, it is possible that there are factors in the early environment of the Samoan child which are particularly favourable to the establishment of nervous stability. Just as a child from a better home environment in our civilisation may be presumed to have a better chance under all circumstances it is conceivable that the Samoan child is not only handled more gently by its culture but that it is also better equipped for those difficulties which it does meet.

Such an assumption is given force by the fact that little Samoan children pass apparently unharmed through experiences which often have grave effects on individual development in our civilisation. Our life histories are filled with the later difficulties which can be traced back to some early, highly charged experience with sex or with birth or death. And yet Samoan children are familiarised at an early age and without disaster, with all three. It is very possible that there are aspects of the life of the young child in Samoa which equip it particularly well for passing through life without nervous instability.

With this hypothesis in mind it is worth while to consider in more detail which parts of the young child's social environment are most strikingly different from ours. Most of these centre about the family situation, the environment which impinges earliest and most intensely upon the child's consciousness. The organisation of a Samoan household

eliminates at one stroke, in almost all cases, many of the special situations which are believed to be productive of undesirable emotional sets. The youngest, the oldest, and the only child, hardly ever occur because of the large number of children in a household, all of whom receive the same treatment. Few children are weighted down with responsibility, or rendered domineering and overbearing as eldest children so often are, or isolated, condemned to the society of adults and robbed of the socialising effect of contact with other children, as only children so often are. No child is petted and spoiled until its view of its own deserts is hopelessly distorted, as is so often the fate of the youngest child. But in the few cases where Samoan family life does approximate ours, the special attitudes incident to order of birth and to close affectional ties with the parent tend to develop.

The close relationship between parent and child, which has such a decisive influence upon so many in our civilisation, that submission to the parent or defiance of the parent may become the dominating pattern of a lifetime, is not found in Samoa. Children reared in households where there are a half dozen adult women to care for them and dry their tears, and a half dozen adult males, all of whom represent constituted authority, do not distinguish their parents as sharply as our children do. The image of the fostering, loving mother, or the admirable father, which may serve to determine affectional choices later in life, is a composite affair, composed of several aunts, cousins, older sisters and grandmothers; of chief, father, uncles, brothers and cousins. Instead of learning as its first lesson that here is a kind mother whose special and principal care is for its welfare, and a father whose authority is to be deferred to, the Samoan baby learns that its world is composed of a hierarchy of male and female adults, all of whom can be depended upon and must be deferred to.

The lack of specialised feeling which results from this diffusion of affection in the household is further reinforced by the segregation of the boys from the girls, so that a child regards the children of the opposite sex

as taboo relatives, regardless of individuality, or as present enemies and future lovers, again regardless of individuality. And the substitution of relationship for preference in forming friendships completes the work. By the time she reaches puberty the Samoan girl has learned to subordinate choice in the selection of friends or lovers to an observance of certain categories. Friends must be relatives of one's own sex; lovers, non-relatives. All claim of personal attraction or congeniality between relatives of opposite sex must be flouted. All of this means that casual sex relations carry no onus of strong attachment, that the marriage of convenience dictated by economic and social considerations is easily born and casually broken without strong emotion.

Nothing could present a sharper contrast to the average American home, with its small number of children, the close, theoretically permanent tie between the parents, the drama of the entrance of each new child upon the scene and the deposition of the last baby. Here the growing girl learns to depend upon a few individuals, to expect the rewards of life from certain kinds of personalities. With this first set towards preference in personal relations she grows up playing with boys as well as with girls, learning to know well brothers and cousins and schoolmates. She does not think of boys as a class but as individuals, nice ones like the brother of whom she is fond, or disagreeable, domineering ones, like a brother with whom she is always on bad terms. Preference in physical make-up, in temperament, in character, develops and forms the foundations for a very different adult attitude in which choice plays a vivid rôle. The Samoan girl never tastes the rewards of romantic love as we know it, nor does she suffer as an old maid who has appealed to no lover or found no lover appealing to her, or as the frustrated wife in a marriage which has not fulfilled her high demands.

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The next great difference between Samoa and our own culture which may be credited with a lower production of maladjusted indi-

viduals is the difference in the attitude towards sex and the education of the children in matters pertaining to birth and death. None of the facts of sex or of birth are regarded as unfit for children, no child has to conceal its knowledge for fear of punishment or ponder painfully over little-understood occurrences. Secrecy, ignorance, guilty knowledge, faulty speculations resulting in grotesque conceptions which may have far-reaching results, a knowledge of the bare physical facts of sex without a knowledge of the accompanying excitement, of the fact of birth without the pains of labour, of the fact of death without the fact of corruption—all the chief flaws in our fatal philosophy of sparing children a knowledge of the dreadful truth—are absent in Samoa. Furthermore, the Samoan child who participates intimately in the lives of a host of relatives has many and varied experiences upon which to base its emotional attitudes. Our children, confined within one family circle (and such confinement is becoming more and more frequent with the growth of cities and the substitution of apartment houses with a transitory population for a neighbourhood of householders), often owe their only experience with birth or death to the birth of a younger brother or sister or the death of a parent or grandparent. Their knowledge of sex, aside from children's gossip, comes from an accidental glimpse of parental activity. This has several very obvious disadvantages. In the first place, the child is dependent for its knowledge upon birth and death entering its own home; the youngest child in a family where there are no deaths may grow to adult life without ever having had any close knowledge of pregnancy, experience with young children, or contact with death.

A host of ill-digested fragmentary conceptions of life and death will fester in the ignorant, inexperienced mind and provide a fertile field for the later growth of unfortunate attitudes. Second, such children draw their experiences from too emotionally toned a field; one birth may be the only one with which they come in close contact for the first twenty years of their lives. And upon the ac-

cidental aspects of this particular birth their whole attitude is dependent. If the birth is that of a younger child who usurps the elder's place, if the mother dies in child bed, or if the child which is born is deformed, birth may seem a horrible thing, fraught with only unwelcome consequences. If the only death bed at which one has ever watched is the death bed of one's mother, the bare fact of death may carry all the emotion which that bereavement aroused, carry forever an effect out of all proportion to the particular deaths encountered later in life.

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So our children are dependent upon accident for their experience of life and death; and those experiences which they are vouchsafed, lie within the intimate family circle and so are the worst possible way of learning general facts about which it is important to acquire no special, distorted attitudes. One death, two births, one sex experience, is a generous total for the child brought up under living conditions which we consider consonant with an American standard of living. And considering the number of illustrations which we consider it necessary to give of how to calculate the number of square feet of paper necessary to paper a room eight feet by twelve feet by fourteen feet, or how to parse an English sentence, this is a low standard of illustration. It might be argued that these are experiences of such high emotional tone that repetition is unnecessary. It might also be argued if a child were severely beaten before being given its first lesson in calculating how to paper a room, and as a sequel to the lesson, saw its father hit its mother with the poker, it would always remember that arithmetic lesson. But what it would know about the real nature of the calculations involved in room-papering is doubtful. In one or two experiences, the child is given no perspective, no chance to relegate the grotesque and unfamiliar physical details of the life process to their proper place. False impressions, part impressions, repulsion, nausea, horror, grow up about some fact experienced only once under intense emotional stress and in an atmosphere

unfavourable to the child's attaining any real understanding.

A standard of reticence which forbids the child any sort of comment upon its experiences makes for the continuance of such false impressions, such hampering emotional attitudes, questions such as, "Why were grandma's lips so blue?" are promptly hushed. In Samoa, where decomposition sets in almost at once, a frank, naïve repugnance to the odours of corruption on the part of all the participants at a funeral robs the physical aspect of death of any special significance. So, in our arrangements, the child is not allowed to repeat his experiences, and he is not permitted to discuss those which he has had and correct his mistakes.

With the Samoan child it is profoundly different. Intercourse, pregnancy, child birth, death, are all familiar occurrences. And the Samoan child experiences them in no such ordered fashion as we, were we to decide for widening the child's experimental field, would regard as essential. In a civilisation which suspects privacy, children of neighbours will be accidental and unemotional spectators in a house where the head of the household is dying or the wife is delivered of a miscarriage. The pathology of the life processes is known to them, as well as the normal. One impression corrects an earlier one until they are able, as adolescents, to think about life and death and emotion without undue preoccupation with the purely physical details.

It must not be supposed, however, that the mere exposure of children to scenes of birth and death would be a sufficient guarantee against the growth of undesirable attitudes. Probably even more influential than the facts which are so copiously presented to them, is the attitude of mind with which their elders regard the matter. To them, birth and sex and death are the natural, inevitable structure of existence, of an existence in which they expect their youngest children to share. Our so often repeated comment that "it's not natural" for children to be permitted to encounter death would seem as incongruous to them as if we were to say it was not natural for children to

see other people eat or sleep. And this calm, matter-of-fact acceptance of their children's presence envelops the children in a protective atmosphere, saves them from shock and binds them closer to the common emotion which is so dignifiedly permitted them.

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Among the factors in the Samoan scheme of life which are influential in producing stable, well-adjusted, robust individuals, the organisation of the family and the attitude towards sex are undoubtedly the most important. But it is necessary to note also the general educational concept which disapproves of precocity and coddles the slow, the laggard, the inept. In a society where the tempo of life was faster, the rewards greater, the amount of energy expended larger, the bright children might develop symptoms of boredom. But the slower pace dictated by the climate, the complacent, peaceful society, and the compensation of the dance, in its blatant precocious display of individuality which drains off some of the discontent which the bright child feels, prevent any child from becoming too bored. And the dullard is not goaded and dragged along faster than he is able until, sick with making an impossible effort, he gives up entirely. This educational policy also tends to blur individual differences and so to minimise jealousy, rivalry, emulation, those social attitudes which arise out of discrepancies of endowment and are so far-reaching in their effects upon the adult personality.

It is one way of solving the problem of differences between individuals and a method of solution exceedingly congenial to a strict adult world. The longer the child is kept in a subject, non-initiating state, the more of the general cultural attitude it will absorb, the less of a disturbing element it will become. Furthermore, if time is given them, the dullards can learn enough to provide a stout body of conservatives upon whose shoulders the burden of the civilisation can safely rest. Giving titles to young men would put a premium upon the exceptional; giving titles to men of forty, who have at last acquired sufficient training to hold them, assures the continua-



tion of the usual. It also discourages the brilliant so that their social contribution is slighter than it might otherwise have been.

We are slowly feeling our way towards a solution of this problem, at least in the case of formal education. Until very recently our educational system offered only two very partial solutions of the difficulties inherent in a great discrepancy between children of different endowment and different rates of development. One solution was to allow a sufficiently long time to each educational step so that all but the mentally defective could succeed, a method similar to the Samoan one and without its compensatory dance floor. The bright child, held back, at intolerably boring tasks, unless he was fortunate enough to find some other outlet for his unused energy, was likely to expend it upon truancy and general delinquency. Our only alternative to this was "skipping" a child from one grade to another, relying upon the child's superior intelligence to bridge the gaps. This was a method congenial to American enthusiasm for meteoric careers from canal boat and log cabin to the White House. Its disadvantages in giving the child a sketchy, discontinuous background, in removing it from its age group, have been enumerated too often to need repetition here. But it is worthy of note that with a very different valuation of individual ability than that entertained by Samoan society we used for years one solution, similar and less satisfactory than theirs, in our formal educational attempts.

The methods which experimental educators are substituting for these unsatisfactory solutions, schemes like the Dalton Plan, or the rapidly moving classes in which a group of children can move ahead at a high, even rate of speed without hurt to themselves or to their duller fellows, is a striking example of the results of applying reason to the institutions of our society. The old red school-house was almost as haphazard and accidental a phenomenon as the Samoan dance floor. It was an institution which had grown up in response to a vaguely felt, unanalysed need. Its methods were analogous to the methods used by primitive peoples, non-rationalised solu-

tions of pressing problems. But the institutionalisation of different methods of education for children of different capacities and different rates of development is not like anything which we find in Samoa or in any other primitive society. It is the conscious, intelligent directing of human institutions in response to observed human needs.

Still another factor in Samoan education which results in different attitudes is the place of work and play in the children's lives. Samoan children do not learn to work through learning to play, as the children of many primitive peoples do. Nor are they permitted a period of lack of responsibility such as our children are allowed. From the time they are four or five years old they perform definite tasks, graded to their strength and intelligence, but still tasks which have a meaning in the structure of the whole society. This does not mean that they have less time for play than American children who are shut up in schools from nine to three o'clock every day. Before the introduction of schools to complicate the ordered routine of their lives, the time spent by the Samoan child in running errands, sweeping the house, carrying water, and taking actual care of the baby, was possibly less than that which the American school child devotes to her studies.

The difference lies not in the proportion of time in which their activities are directed and the proportion in which they are free, but rather in the difference of attitude. With the professionalisation of education and the specialisation of industrial tasks which has stripped the individual home of its former variety of activities, our children are not made to feel that the time they do devote to supervised activity is functionally related to the world of adult activity. Although this lack of connection is more apparent than real, it is still sufficiently vivid to be a powerful determinant in the child's attitude. The Samoan girl who tends babies, carries water, sweeps the floor; or the little boy who digs for bait, or collects cocoanuts, has no such difficulty. The necessary nature of their tasks is obvious. And the practice of giving a child a task which he can do well and never permitting a childish,

inefficient tinkering with adult apparatus, such as we permit to our children, who bang aimlessly and destructively on their fathers' typewriters, results in a different attitude towards work. American children spend hours in schools learning tasks whose visible relation to their mothers' and fathers' activities is often quite impossible to recognise. Their participation in adults' activities is either in terms of toys, tea-sets and dolls and toy automobiles, or else a meaningless and harmful tampering with the electric light system. (It must be understood that here, as always, when I say American, I do not mean those Americans recently arrived from Europe, who still present a different tradition of education. Such a group would be the Southern Italians, who still expect productive work from their children.)

So our children make a false set of categories, work; play, and school; work for adults, play for children's pleasure, and schools as an inexplicable nuisance with some compensations. These false distinctions are likely to produce all sorts of strange attitudes, an apathetic treatment of a school which bears no known relation to life, a false dichotomy between work and play, which may result either in a dread of work as implying irksome responsibility or in a later contempt for play as childish.

The Samoan child's dichotomy is different. Work consists of those necessary tasks which keep the social life going: planting and harvesting and preparation of food, fishing, house-building, mat-making, care of children, collecting of property to validate marriages and births and succession to titles and to entertain strangers, these are the necessary activities of life, activities in which every member of the community, down to the smallest child, has a part. Work is not a way of acquiring leisure; where every household produces its own food and clothes and furniture, where there is no large amount of fixed capital and households of high rank are simply characterised by greater industry in the discharge of greater obligations, our whole picture of saving, of investment, of deferred enjoyment, is completely absent. (There is even a lack of

clearly defined seasons of harvest, which would result in special abundance of food and consequent feasting. Food is always abundant, except in some particular village where a few weeks of scarcity may follow a period of lavish entertaining.) Rather, work is something which goes on all the time for every one; no one is exempt; few are overworked. There is social reward for the industrious, social toleration for the man who does barely enough. And there is always leisure—leisure, be it noted, which is not the result of hard work or accumulated capital at all, but is merely the result of a kindly climate, a small population, a well-integrated social system, and no social demands for spectacular expenditure. And play is what one does with the time left over from working, a way of filling in the wide spaces in a structure of unirksome work.

Play includes dancing, singing, games, weaving necklaces of flowers, flirting, repartee, all forms of sex activity. And there are social institutions like the ceremonial inter-village visit which partake of both work and play. But the distinctions between work as something one has to do but dislikes, and play as something one wants to do; of work as the main business of adults, play as the main concern of children, are conspicuously absent. Children's play is like adults' play in kind, interest, and in its proportion to work. And the Samoan child has no desire to turn adult activities into play, to translate one sphere into the other. I had a box of white clay pipes for blowing soap bubbles sent me. The children were familiar with soap bubbles, but their native method of blowing them was very inferior to the use of clay pipes. But after a few minutes' delight in the unusual size and beauty of the soap bubbles, one little girl after another asked me if she might please take her pipe home to her mother, for pipes were meant to smoke, not to play with. Foreign dolls did not interest them, and they have no dolls of their own, although children of other islands weave dolls from the palm leaves from which Samoan children weave balls. They never make toy houses, nor play house, nor sail toy boats. Little boys would

climb into a real outrigger canoe and practise paddling it within the safety of the lagoon. This whole attitude gave a greater coherence to the children's lives than we often afford our children.

The intelligibility of a child's life among us is measured only in terms of the behaviour of other children. If all the other children go to school the child who does not feels incongruous in their midst. If the little girl next door is taking music lessons, why can't Mary; or why must Mary take music lessons, if the other little girl doesn't take them. But so sharp is our sense of difference between the concerns of children and of adults that the child does not learn to judge its own behaviour in relationship to adult life. So children often learn to regard play as something inherently undignified, and as adults mangle pitifully their few moments of leisure. But the Samoan child measures her every act of work or play in terms of her whole community; each item of conduct is dignified in terms of its realised relationship to the only standard she knows, the life of a Samoan village. So complex and stratified a society as ours cannot hope to develop spontaneously any such simple scheme of education. Again we will be hard put to it to devise ways of participation for children, and means of articulating their school life with the rest of life which will give them the same dignity which Samoa affords her children.

Last among the cultural differences which may influence the emotional stability of the child is the lack of pressure to make important choices. Children are urged to learn, urged to behave, urged to work, but they are not urged to hasten the choices which they make themselves. The first point at which this attitude makes itself felt is in the matter of the brother and sister taboo, a cardinal point of modesty and decency. Yet the exact stage at which the taboo should be observed is always left to the younger child. When it reaches a point of discretion, of understanding, it will of itself feel "ashamed" and establish the formal barrier which will last until old age. Likewise, sex activity is never urged upon the young people, nor marriage forced

upon them at a tender age. Where the possibilities of deviation from the accepted standard are so slight, a few years' leeway holds no threat for the society. The child who comes later to a realisation of the brother and sister taboo really endangers nothing.

This laissez faire attitude has been carried over into the Samoan Christian Church. The Samoan saw no reason why young unmarried people should be pressed to make momentous decisions which would spoil part of their fun in life. Time enough for such serious matters after they were married or later still, when they were quite sure of what steps they were taking and were in less danger of falling from grace every month or so. The missionary authorities, realising the virtues of going slowly and sorely vexed to reconcile Samoan sex ethics with a Western European code, saw the great disadvantages of unmarried Church members who were not locked up in Church schools. Consequently, far from urging the adolescent to think upon her soul the native pastor advises her to wait until she is older, which she is only too glad to do.

But, especially in the case of our Protestant churches, there is a strong preference among us for the appeal to youth. The Reformation, with its emphasis upon individual choice, was unwilling to accept the tacit habitual Church membership which was the Catholic pattern, a membership marked by additional sacramental gifts but demanding no sudden conversion, no renewal of religious feeling. But the Protestant solution is to defer the choice only so far as necessary, and the moment the child reaches an age which may be called "years of discretion" it makes a strong, dramatic appeal. This appeal is reinforced by parental and social pressure; the child is bidden to choose now and wisely. While such a position in the churches which stem from the Reformation and its strong emphasis on individual choice was historically inevitable, it is regrettable that the convention has lasted so long. It has even been taken over by non-sectarian reform groups, all of whom regard the adolescent child as the most legitimate field of activity.

In all of these comparisons between Sa-

moan and American culture, many points are useful only in throwing a spotlight upon our own solutions, while in others it is possible to find suggestions for change. Whether or not we envy other peoples one of their solutions, our attitude towards our own solutions must be greatly broadened and deepened by a consideration of the way in which other

peoples have met the same problems. Realising that our own ways are not humanly inevitable nor God-ordained, but are the fruit of a long and turbulent history, we may well examine in turn all of our institutions, thrown into strong relief against the history of other civilisations, and weighing them in the balance, be not afraid to find them wanting.

## 5 • *The Relation of School and Culture*

The cultural system shapes the school no less than it shapes the individual. The school—who attends it, what and how they are taught, and how it is operated and controlled—is always influenced by the controlling sentiments, ideas, and social practices comprising the culture. It is said that Agassiz, the famous naturalist, once asked a student to reconstruct a fish from a single bone. Although the elements of a cultural system are not so closely related as the bones of the skeleton of a fish, it is still possible to build a picture of a cultural system from any one of its significant parts. With thorough knowledge of the school system, it should be possible for the student of society to build a fairly adequate picture of the social system of which the school is a part. This is possible not only because the school is related structurally to the other institutions and social processes of the society somewhat as a bone is related to other bones in the structure of an animal but also because the character of the school reflects in the character of the society.

It follows from what has just been said that changes in the cultural system will be reflected in the school. The reflection will not occur immediately, the lapse of time varying with the nature and extent of the cultural changes. Of course, some changes will be so insignificant that the school ignores them altogether. But changes in the economic, political, vocational, and moral aspects of a culture will usually be incorporated in the program and operation of the school.

In the following selection, Professors B.Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores indicate how the school is shaped by the cultural system. They indicate, also, how the purposes, methods, and content of the educational program reflect the values of society, or at least (in a society characterized by a highly developed class system) of the dominant class.

The discussion then turns to the question of what happens in the school when the way in which the people make a living undergoes radical changes. The example used in the discussion is taken from a simple social system, but it portrays in bold outline what happens in any society in which the basic mode of existence undergoes far-reaching

transformation. In the light of this example and the discussion of it, it is possible to discern the source of many of the stresses and strains which the educational system of the United States is now exhibiting.

If an observer looks at the curriculum of the school in any society, he will find, either stated or implied, a set of educational objectives, a body of subject matter, a list of exercises or activities to be performed, and a way of determining whether or not the objectives have been reached by the students. He will also find some kind of control which the teacher is required to exercise over the learners. Now these things comprising the curriculum are always, in every society, derived from the culture. The objectives stressed will be those that reflect the controlling ideas and sentiments contained in the universals—and especially in the core of the universals. The subject matter will tend to be that which is believed to embrace the most significant ideas and most generally used knowledges and skills. The way in which the learners are controlled will reflect the prevailing methods of social control of the society at large. As the instrument of society for the education of the young, the curriculum will necessarily reflect the ideals, knowledges, and skills that are believed to be significant, or that are related to the common activities of the members of society. It is therefore interwoven with the whole social fabric that sustains it.

From the structure of the culture it is possible to gain a clearer notion of the distinction between the curriculum of common education and that of special education. According to this view, common education in any society will be based upon the universal elements of the culture and such aspects of the specialties as are of general concern. Special education will be based largely upon the dominant specialties of the culture. It will be designed to train the individual for a particular social or vocational position.

### *Common Education Based upon Cultural Universals*

Common education is concerned with the problem of maintaining the society as a closely knit and well integrated unit. It is only natural, therefore, that the rules and knowledges by which the people as a whole regulate their conduct and anticipate the behavior of one another should be its principal content. Not all the universals, however, will be contained in the common curriculum. It will ordinarily not incorporate such superficial elements as the method of greeting friends or the way to tie shoes. As a rule, these things are left to the individual to acquire informally and often unconsciously through participation in the common life of the people. Instead, the curriculum will tend to emphasize the more fundamental universals, or cultural core, such as the values, sentiments, knowledges, and skills that provide the society with stability and vitality and the individual with motivations and deep-lying controls of conduct.

The heart of the universals, as already pointed out, is the standards and knowledges by which the people decide what is right and wrong, good and evil, beautiful and ugly, true and false, appropriate and inappropriate in all sorts of activities—political, economic, aesthetic, educational, or what not. These standards constitute the moral content of the society. Next to them in importance are the knowledges and skills that have to do with the control and improvement of the common activities of the people such as their political and economic behavior. Together these constitute the subject matter of common education.

### *Special Education Related to the Specialties of the Culture*

Returning now to special education, it is to be remembered that the specialties of a culture are usually those ways of thinking and acting associated either with vocational groups or social classes, or both. Hence special education may follow the interests of either one or both of these special groups. In societies claiming a recognized social elite, it will be found that instruments of education will be set aside for training the immature members of the elite group in the special points of view and patterns of conduct of these privileged adults. The presence of *exclusive* private or finishing schools is always evidence of the existence of an elite class having particular outlooks, polite manners, and behavioral patterns, which it wishes to maintain. Indeed, the existence of such classes has led in some nations to the creation of dual educational systems—one for the folk and another for the upper classes. For this reason higher forms of education, including secondary as well as higher schools, have tended historically to be designed for the privileged few. Even in the more democratically inclined countries where a single educational ladder has been adopted, the curriculum of the upper rungs reflects a privileged origin.

Education for vocational purposes is always correlated with the needs of persons of particular socio-economic levels; hence it is sometimes difficult to distinguish from that form of special education designed to equip the individual to occupy a particular position in society. The sons of upper-class families in Western nations who go to private schools or to publicly supported schools specially designed for them, to pursue so-called "cultural" subjects—not to mention programs leading to "higher" professions—are thereby being trained for vocations. This type of training usually is just as vocational for them as the study of how to read blueprints would be for a prospective plumber, because the so-called "cultural" courses prepare them for domestic governmental positions, for foreign diplomatic service, or for positions in industrial bu-

reaucracies. In any case, display of relatively useless knowledge, information, and skills, marking their possessor as a member of the leisure class, will be of inestimable value, for it gains admission to the polite circles of other countries as well as his own.

The point of this discussion is not that all vocational education is class education. Only in societies where certain vocations are associated with particular social classes will this tend to be true. Social systems that emphasize an open-door policy for all occupations—making it possible for every individual irrespective of race, creed, or social background to acquire the knowledges and skills he is capable and desirous of obtaining—will be those societies that reduce the chances that some occupations will be monopolized by privileged classes. In these societies vocational education will be least associated with class education.

### *Class Education Sometimes Confused with Common Education*

Not only is there a tendency for class education to be confused with vocational education but also with common education. When a society passes from a phase marked by social classes to a classless phase or to one in which classes exist only in a loose sense, the educational ideals and programs designed in the earlier phase for the education of the upper classes tend to persist in the new phase, under the guise of general or common education. It is for this reason that the curriculum of the American high schools, as well as that of American colleges, has been so slow to adjust to the demands of mass education. Thorstein Veblen, about fifty years ago, made it abundantly clear that remnants of the leisure class educational program persisted in schools and colleges. These remnants may still be detected today.

Moreover, the colleges tend on the whole to continue to provide vocational programs under the banner of liberal education. President Conant of Harvard University has aptly phrased this point.

By and large, the general education which our conventional four-year liberal

arts colleges provide in one form or another is given as a background for two vocations—the learned professions and the managerial positions in business. This type of education, however much it may be improved (and it will be improved greatly in the coming years, I feel sure), cannot be considered apart from the vocations for which it prepares. In short, it has no overall general validity for it cannot be considered apart from the clientele for which it has been developed over the years.<sup>1</sup>

It is disturbing that in the United States, where the prevailing social creed denies the desirability of social classes, there should be social groups trying to reinstate and bolster up outworn systems of class education in the name of general or liberal education. Few things have encumbered thinking about the development of a more adequate program of common education in the United States, as well as in other countries, so much as adherence to educational ideas brought over from the class system of past cultural phases.

## CULTURAL CHANGE AND THE CURRICULUM

The discussion in the preceding section has developed the relation existing between a stable, well-integrated, and relatively static culture, on the one hand, and the curriculum that emerges within it, on the other. What happens to the curriculum and what curriculum problems arise when the culture is changing are just as important as the relationships the curriculum bears to the structure of a static culture. (In modern society, they may be more important.) Since the curriculum is interwoven with the whole cultural fabric, it follows that as the culture undergoes serious modifications the curriculum will become an object of concern, especially among the more sensitive members of the teaching profession and of the society at large. The

adequacy of the old curriculum for the new cultural circumstances will be searchingly questioned and changes in the curriculum proposed.

In societies experiencing little cultural change, the culture will be largely taken on unconsciously by the individual—although the school, where it exists, will emphasize certain elements of the culture by making them explicit through verbalization. On the other hand, in societies where fundamental associations are breaking down under the impact of social forces, fewer standards of conduct and elements of knowledge will be picked up informally, and these will tend to be inconsistent and conflicting. The problem of maintaining a stable, integrated culture in such a society will, therefore, be quite different from the problem in a static social system. The demands made upon the school with regard to this problem will be correspondingly more taxing, and failure to meet them will be more fraught with social disaster.

### *Cultural Change Related to Increase of Alternatives*

Before proceeding further with the discussion of the curriculum problems that arise in a changing society, it will be well to take a brief look at the nature of cultural change. A culture not only consists of elements, but these elements are interrelated and so mutually adjusted that they form a configuration, or cultural pattern. When alternative elements appear in a culture, they tend to disturb the cultural pattern in various degrees, depending upon the factors they affect. They come into competition with elements comprising the universals and specialties, and their general acceptance requires a modification of the relationships among various factors. When the number of alternatives is low relative to the number of factors comprising the universals, especially the core, the culture will have a high degree of stability. As alternatives increase relative to the universals, social change is increased; and the need for a reintegration embracing a large proportion of the new elements becomes more and more

imperative if the culture is not to disintegrate.

Alternatives that emerge from time to time, or are borrowed from other cultures, have varying capacities for cultural disruption. Some alternatives, such as types of ornaments, new techniques of decorating, or new kinds of wearing apparel, will have little effect upon the cultural pattern. The introduction of the wrist watch, for example, had no influence upon the basic structure of American society. Other innovations, such as changes in ways of making a living or the development of new sources of energy, will seriously upset a culture and necessitate far-reaching readjustments. This is true because the most basic aspect of the life of a people is the manner in which they secure the necessities of existence. The superstructure of society (although more so with some aspects than with others) is erected upon the way people exploit the material world in the search for food, clothing, and shelter. Any change in the methods of such exploitation will, therefore, shake the whole cultural fabric and require large-scale social reconstruction.

### *The Tanala: An Illustration of Cultural Change*

. . . The culture of the United States has been shaken to its foundations by cultural innovations that have been wiping out the traditional modes of material production. This topic requires an extended analysis and would be too complex for an illustrative case at the present juncture of the discussion. An illustration will be drawn instead from the simpler culture of the Tanala, a hill tribe of western Madagascar. The cultural changes here described illustrate how property relations, family structure, community life, political arrangements, and even methods of warfare were reconstructed by the introduction of a new way of growing rice. The picture is suggestive of how American culture is being reshaped by science and technology.

The Tanala are a hill tribe of western Madagascar. . . . Prior to about 200 years ago the economic basis of their life was the cultivation of dry rice by the cutting and

burning method. Under the local conditions this method gave a good crop the first year and a moderately good one from the same land five to ten years later. After this the land had to be abandoned until it had once more produced a fairly heavy growth of jungle, twenty to twenty-five years as a minimum. Since the newly cleared land produced the best crops, the usual native method was to utilize all the original jungle which could be profitably exploited with the village as a center, then move the village to a new locality and begin the process again. Under these conditions there was no opportunity for individual ownership of land to develop. The village as a whole held a territory within which it moved from site to site, and forest products such as game taken from this territory belonged to the man who obtained them. Joint families owned the crops growing on jungle land which they had cleared, but the division of land for this use was made as equitable as possible. According to one account, the village elders staked out equal frontages of land to be cleared and assigned one of these to each joint family. The family members, working in a group, then cleared back from the line as far as they thought necessary to provide for their needs. If a family had had bad luck with its crops one year, it would be given an advantage the next. As a result, no marked inequalities in wealth between the joint families ever developed. As there was no market for any surplus, there was no attempt to cultivate more land than was actually needed, and the product was divided by the joint family's head, each household receiving according to its needs.

The cultivation of wet rice appeared first among the clans on the eastern edge of the Tanala territory, having been borrowed from the Betsileo. It began as a simple adjunct to dry rice, the new crop being planted in naturally wet places in the bottoms of the valleys. From the first this work seems to have been done by households rather than joint families, the task being too small to necessitate the coopera-



tion of the whole group. Later came small systems of terraces, also borrowed, but by the time this improvement was accepted the pattern of household cultivation of the new crop had become thoroughly established, so that joint families, as such, rarely built terrace systems or shared the produce.

Even before the introduction of wet rice the Tanala had well-developed patterns of personal property, and these, in combination with the idea of family rights to land during the brief period in which it bore a crop, opened the door to individual ownership of land and the exclusive right of a household to the rice patch it cultivated. Since rice terraces were actually growing crops throughout most of the year and had to be kept in repair even between seasons, the land which they occupied never really went out of use and therefore never reverted to the village to be reassigned. Only a limited amount of land could be utilized for this purpose due to soil, height of water available for irrigation, and other natural factors. Hence those households which had not had the energy and foresight to take up rice land at first soon found themselves permanently excluded. Insensibly there grew up within what had formerly been a classless society a class of landholders, and with this went a weakening of the joint family organization. Loyalty to this unit had been maintained largely by the economic interdependence of its members and their constant need for coöperation. But a household could tend its fields of irrigated rice unaided, and its head felt a not unnatural reluctance to share the produce with persons who had contributed nothing toward it.

The rise of individual land tenure did not affect the expropriated very seriously at first, since they could continue with the older method of exploiting village land not available for irrigation. However, land within easy reach of the village would be increasingly exhausted, and the landless households had to go farther and farther afield to find jungle. Often their fields were so far away that they could not possibly

go and return in the same day, so they developed the custom of building combined granaries and sleeping quarters there. These distant fields also became increasingly household rather than joint family enterprises. Perhaps the breakdown of the joint family patterns of coöperation had already progressed too far when the system was instituted, or the joint family may have been unwilling to risk any large number of men so far from home. This camping-out was dangerous since a hostile war party could cut off a small group with ease.

One of the greatest stresses within the culture arose in connection with the periodic moving of the village. This was a deep-rooted custom, but now the villages were split into the landless, who needed to move, and the landowners, who had a capital investment in the locality and were unwilling to move. A further breakdown of the joint family system resulted. Under the old conditions villages not infrequently split and formed new units, but such splits were always along joint family lines. At most, a man who stood at the head of three or four households within the lineage would secede with his group and found a distinct lineage in the new village. Now when villages split it was the expropriated who moved, so that the immigrant group formed a cross-section of the original lineages. In the new locality the same process went on again until the land which had formed the range of the original mobile village was dotted with descendant villages, each held in place by the irrigated fields about it.

The combination of increasingly settled life and breakdown of the joint family into its component households had still further results. The mobile villages had been socially self-contained, endogamous units. The settled villages were much less so. The joint family retained its religious importance, based on the worship of a common ancestor, after it had lost much of its functional importance and even after its component households had been scattered. Family members from different villages

would still be called together on some ceremonial occasions, and this going and coming helped to break down the old patterns of village isolation. Inter marriages became increasingly common, especially among the clans of the Menabe division whose pattern of cross-cousin marriage often made such matings necessary. Thus the original pattern of independent village groups was increasingly transformed into a tribal one.

The new conditions also had important repercussions on the patterns of native warfare. The mobile villages had always fortified themselves with a simple ditch and stockade, but there was little point in expending a vast amount of labor on a site which would presently be abandoned. An enemy war party, using surprise, had a fair opportunity of taking such a village, seizing a rich booty of cattle and personable young women and driving the group out of its territory, which could then be added to the enemy's own range. In fact this was a normal procedure whenever a village felt itself crowded. Now that permanent residence in a village was assured, the villagers could set themselves seriously to the work of fortification, and by the time the Europeans arrived some of the eastern villages, which had gotten wet rice first and hence been settled longest, had made themselves impregnable to anything short of artillery. I was told of one village which was protected by three concentric ditches each twenty feet wide and of the same depth, straight-sided and with hedges of prickly pear planted between. The Tanala probably copied this form of defense from the Betsileo, although they had not adopted it while they still followed the mobile pattern. The new conditions made what was already a well-known foreign trait desirable, and it was accepted accordingly.

Since the natives had no siege machinery, these great fortifications reduced war to a stalemate. It was impossible for an attacking party to take a village except by treachery, and the large, determined war parties of the earlier period degenerated more and more into small groups of raiders

who aimed to cut off stragglers. This tendency was increased by an increase in the value of slaves. The presence of Arab, European, and Imerina slave-traders, who gave guns in exchange, had something to do with this, but their activities were never carried on on a large scale. In part, at least, this increased importance of slaves was correlated with the new crop. Under the old system slaves were of little economic value, while now they could be put to work in the rice fields. With the rise of slavery there came an increasing need for techniques of ransom and other relations involving captive slaves, and these were gradually developed. In particular, a technique arose for regularizing the relations between a slave woman and her master, her family paying half her market value and thus promoting her to the status of a legal wife. In this way still further bonds were established between villages, even when these belonged to different clans, and the whole tribe was drawn more and more together.

The last step in this drama of change came less than a century ago. In the early mobile period Tanala organization was highly democratic. The head of one of the lineages in a village acted as a magistrate and executive, but there was no formal investiture of any sort and he had no real power. Outside the village there was no recognized authority of any sort. The settled tribes to the east, on the other hand, had had kings for some centuries and were in process of developing a sort of feudal system which cut across the old clan-locality lines and strengthened the central authority. About 1840 one of the Tanala clans established domination over several of the other northern clans, declared itself royal, and announced that the hereditary head of its senior lineage was now King of the Tanala Menabe. Incidentally, the control of this king always remained rather weak and he never really controlled any of the groups who were still mobile. Over the settled clans he was able to exercise some real authority, but the kingdom came to an end before adequate machinery for government

could be developed or borrowed. This first king introduced two new elements of culture, both taken from the Betsileo. He built himself an individual tomb, thus breaking a long-established Tanala custom, and after his death the Tanala accepted the belief that the souls of their kings passed into snakes.<sup>2</sup>

The changes in Tanala culture due to the introduction of wet rice farming may be summarized as follows: (1) personal property increased in importance, (2) new techniques of farming were introduced, (3) new community life arose and was comprised of cross-sections of many families, (4) exogamous marriages increased, (5) importance of family ties decreased, (6) slaves became valuable, (7) the political unit changed from joint family to kingdom, (8) emphasis upon personal goals and personal success increased, (9) competition in the struggle for existence was accentuated, (10) new types of conflicts were engendered by the accentuated competition in the struggle for existence.

This illustration makes clear how a single basic alternative, once it is accepted, has consequences that spread throughout the entire cultural system, making it necessary to readjust cultural elements on a wide scale or else suffer cultural decay and possibly cultural dissolution. It also helps us to understand what is meant by cultural integration. When innovations occur in a culture, they become candidates for acceptance; and, when they are accepted, changes in other elements must be made so that a new balance of cultural factors results. This mutual adjustment of factors is what is meant by integration. Cultural integration can be thought of as an end product—a pattern of relationships already achieved. It can also be thought of as a process of adjustment, as something going on in one aspect or another of a culture as new cultural elements arise and compete with others for acceptance.

There can also be various degrees of integration, depending upon the extent of the adjustment of factors at different times in the history of a culture. When the number of alternatives is low relative to the universals of a culture, a high degree of integration obtains. When the alternatives increase, relative to the universals, more rapidly than they can be assimilated, the culture inclines towards disintegration. This phase is distinctly noticeable in the Tanales as the impact of wet rice farming begins to break up the family pattern and to uproot people from the communal community. If this trend continues until the rules by which the people live are largely wiped out, and if no other loyalties arise to take their place, the culture disintegrates altogether. In the career of mankind many cultures have arisen, have flourished vigorously, and yet have perished because they fail to build a new cultural synthesis when the alternatives became numerous.

In a period of cultural disruption the anxieties of individuals are increased in number and intensity. "A society," as Wirth<sup>3</sup> has reminded us, "is possible in the last analysis because the individuals in it carry around in their heads some sort of picture of that society."<sup>4</sup> When the universals of a culture begin to change significantly, especially if the change reaches down to the fundamental rules of conduct, the picture of society becomes blurred, and individuals find themselves unable to carry on normal activities in a rational way. They are led by the old rules to expect other persons to behave in certain ways. But if these rules are no longer valid, other persons will not conform to these expectations. As this occurs on a wider and wider scale, the individual becomes bewildered; his sense of common reality vanishes, and with it goes his sense of personal stability and security. It is interesting to find that, in his psychological interpretation of the changes in Tanala culture, Kardiner points to the rise of personal anxieties growing out of the changes in the individual's relation to productive property. Kardiner says:

The significance of property (already quite pronounced in Tanala culture) is augmented until it becomes the sole means of enhancing the ego. The pursuit of property becomes the most important element in the security system of the individual. . . . There was an influx of new needs for the individual. New needs as well as new anxieties were added to the individual's problem of adjustment. New needs were created in that the individual required different qualities to get along in this new society, and new anxieties in that he was susceptible to new dangers, dangers of poverty and degradation.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Curriculum Problems Arising from Cultural Change*

Turning now to the curriculum, certain problems are always prominent in a period of cultural upset and reintegration. If the Tanalas had had schools, the teaching profession would have been confronted by basic educational problems growing out of changes incident to the introduction of methods of wet rice farming. As property changed from communal to personal ownership and control, as the old pattern of family life began to disintegrate and the new pattern based on household ownership emerged, as the community became divided between those who owned land and those who did not, the teaching profession would have become uncertain as to what objectives should be sought through the educational system. The educational journals of Tanala would have carried article after article on the need for clarifying the objectives of education; in faculty and committee meetings teachers would have disagreed upon what the schools should attempt to achieve. Some writers would have extolled the old virtues and ways of life; others would have frowned upon these while stressing the new ideals and the advantages to be gained from the new method of production and the way of life it entailed.

The teachers would not have known whether they should emphasize the sacredness of communal property, in keeping with the tradition of the tribe, or the virtues of private ownership and control, which the wet rice farmers were defending. They would not have known whether the old joint family pattern of cooperation should be bolstered by giving it increased attention in the curriculum, or whether the household family-enterprise unit should be stressed instead. They would not have known whether to emphasize the old community life with its periodic moving of the village, or to stress the scattering of the villagers dictated by the demands of wet rice farming and the consequent stripping of ownership from the less enterprising of the population. They would not have known whether to stress the old informal mode of living together or the emerging tendency toward a tribal kingdom. They would have been uncertain about these things because there was no consensus among the people with respect to them. The old consensus, upon which the educational program was based, would have been so much in doubt that the mandate of the teaching profession would not have been clear.

Of course, the teaching profession might have contented itself by appealing to such abstractions as the development of a good citizen or the teaching of the fundamentals. But these would have been as much in question as anything else. Who would have been a good citizen in Tanala? To what traditions, ideals, beliefs, and patterns of conduct would he have been loyal? Would he have had the point of view and motivations of the wet rice farmer or the dry rice farmer? What would have been the fundamentals? Of course, the native tongue and perhaps the modes of calculation might have been included. Beyond these what would have been basic in the behavior of the people? What attitudes? What beliefs and loyalties?

The purpose here is not to paint a hopeless picture of the curriculum problems of the Tanalas. There were, of course, some elements of the culture that remained and could have been used as bases for judging the pur-

poses and program of the school—some measure of family loyalty, allegiance to the tribe itself, and doubtless a great number of ideals which this account of cultural change among the Tanalas does not contain. The import of the discussion is, first, that a period of profound cultural transformation will upset the curriculum and require that it be reconstructed with respect to purpose, content, method of instruction, and means of evaluation; and, second, that the teaching profession will experience a period of uncertainty as to the kind of educational program to build.

The principal educational task arises from the fact that in a period of transformation the common orientation of the people is profoundly disturbed. They are confused as to what to believe, what to strive for, what to defend; consequently, they are often in conflict one with another. Depending upon the degree of disintegration, the capacity of the people to think, feel, and act as a unit is reduced. They continue to live together, but communication among them breaks down;

for as the community of ideas and habits dissolves, individuals no longer respond alike to the same situation. Under this condition the curriculum must be designed to help expand the common orientation in which each individual shares. The school alone cannot do this, but it can make a major contribution in this direction.

The task of curriculum building will be principally that of constructing the curriculum so that cultural elements, both new and old, will be mutually adjusted and a new cultural synthesis achieved. The task is to build a curriculum that will achieve a set of consistent ideas and values, in which all members of society can share. A desirable curriculum is one that reflects a consistent cultural point of view and attempts to achieve a mutual adjustment of cultural elements in terms of a common orientation. An undesirable curriculum, on the other hand, is one that accentuates the maladjustment of cultural elements by stressing those traditional ideals, knowledges, sentiments, and skills that are no longer relevant to social realities. •

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to set forth the idea that man is born into a cultural system constituting in a genuine sense his human environment. In this world of meanings and symbols the child takes on the ways of behaving which lift him above the level of animal existence and bring him into a life of intimate human association. It should be evident from all the selections above that many of the individual's needs and problems, his notions of right and wrong, his ideas of truth and falsity and beauty, his attitudes toward nature and his fellow men, are determined by his culture. Likewise the problems of the teacher and of the teaching profession arise from the confusions and conflicts current in the culture itself. In a sense neither the teachers nor the profession make their own difficulties. These are made for them by the culture in the course of its growth and development or its disintegration and decline.

As the culture changes from day to day and year to year, new demands are made upon children and youth as well as upon adults. Many of these individuals are unable to respond to these demands satisfactorily without some sort of systematic help. In American society it falls to the lot of the school to participate in rendering such assistance. Thus the educational program comes to be the object of study and reform in order to meet the new demands made upon it by those who must have assistance in learning how to live in the sort of society that is and is coming to be.

Turning now to a more specific summary of the present chapter, we can abstract from the preceding selections the few basic ideas which they were chosen to develop. In general form, they are as follows:

1. Human nature can be viewed in two ways. It can be thought of as the biological make-up of man, with emphasis upon those features that distinguish him most sharply from the lower species. It can also be viewed as what man in a particular culture has come to be by virtue of the things that he has learned. In this sense, man's nature is learned and is thus subject to the laws of individual and social change. There is no point in attempting to decide which of these interpretations is correct, for it is a matter of choice to be made in the light of one's purposes. However, in the interest of clarity one is obligated to distinguish these two interpretations and to render unto each those things and only those things which belong to it. That which is cultural in origin should not be treated as though it were biological and that which is biological should not be taken for cultural.

2. Cultural human nature, being learned, is acquired from participation in the cultural system. How the individual participates in the culture is influenced by the social position he occupies. He may be the youngest child. He may be the head of a family. He may be a clerk in a store. He may be in any number of such positions. These are referred to as statuses. In each of these positions the individual does many things. He performs certain acts. He has certain ideas concerning what is required of him, and certain expectations of others. He may exercise influence upon others. He may be involved in any number of activities. These are referred to as the roles he plays, and for each status there are many roles. The individual thus takes on his cultural nature through all the various roles he plays in the statuses he occupies. Man's relation to the culture can be thought of from the standpoint of his various statuses and roles as well as from that of the total culture. For educational purposes, both of these are important. Without an understanding of role and status, the teacher can neither understand behavior thoroughly nor modify it effectively.

3. Except in adult education, the teacher is concerned with individuals having either child or adolescent status. In any event, his task is to help the individual to acquire a new status or to learn to play the roles expected of him. In Samoa and other simple societies, the child learns his various roles by participating informally in the culture, and he takes on the roles that go with adolescent and adult statuses in the same way. This is possible for three reasons. First, there are few alternative ways of behaving open to the individual. Secondly, the pressures of the group are in the direction of conformity to the ways generally accepted in the society. Thirdly, the amount of learning required to perform the various roles is relatively small and the pressure to play them with refined skill is often feeble.

A complex society, such as that in the United States, stands in sharp contrast to the simple Samoan life. Here the child and adolescent statuses are more sharply marked off from the adult status, and the various roles are characterized by a multiplicity of

alternatives. As a result, the life of both the child and the adolescent is more complex and fraught with greater emotional distress. For the same reason, the task of helping the individual learn his various roles as he moves from status to status is one that requires consideration of the problem of coordinating the various educational influences of the society.

4. The school is the institution created by complex societies to help the child and the adolescent to assume the roles expected of them when they reach adult status. Since it is an integral part of the society, it will be affected by cultural changes just as the individual will be, and especially by those changes that affect the ways in which the people make a living. In times of such changes the purposes as well as the means of education become objects of controversy. Hence, fundamental changes in a culture always breed confusion and uncertainty both in the public and in the teaching profession about the objectives of the school and the means of achieving them.

Thus far, little has been said about American culture. For the most part we have been interested in the concepts of culture and cultural change in general and in noting how both the individual and the school are shaped by the culture in any society whatever. In the next chapter more attention will be given to American culture and its school, but especial emphasis will be placed upon the community as a focal point of a culture in a complex society.

### THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. Suppose there are two American children of European ancestry, one reared from birth in a Chinese home in central China, the other in an American home in the United States. In what respects will these two individuals be alike when they are mature? In what respects will they be different? Why?

2. Which of the following characteristics of individuals belong to biological human nature? Which belong to cultural human nature? Which belong to neither? (*a*) the need for food; (*b*) the need for oxygen; (*c*) the sense of color harmony; (*d*) the sense of right and wrong and of good and bad; (*e*) the belief that a certain act is morally right; (*f*) the idea of truth; (*g*) the perception of objects, such as tables, amoebas, and stars; (*h*) methods of thinking. What criteria did you use in determining the category to which the items in the above list should be assigned? Make a list of characteristics which are not mentioned above but which you believe are part of cultural human nature.

3. Make a list of some of the things which you believe, and try to find out whether or not your social status and roles cause you to accept them.

4. What educational problems, if any, will teachers encounter only in a period of fundamental social change? Why will they encounter these problems in such a period and in no other?

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1. If you wish to read further on the nature of culture and kinds of cultural systems, you will find *Patterns of Culture*, by Ruth Benedict, very stimulating. An extensive treatment of the same subject appears in *Mirror for Man*, by Clyde Kluckhohn, and in Melville Herskovitz's *Man and His Works*.

2. Readers who are interested in the effects of culture upon the development of the individual will find Ralph Linton's brief treatment of this subject in his *Cultural Background of Personality* helpful.

3. Pearl Buck's *My Several Worlds* is a fascinating literary account of the culture of the Chinese and its differences from American culture. You will also gain many insights from this book on the ways in which the culture influences the development of the individual—his ideas, hopes, manners, self-control, and even his physical being.

4. The able student will find excellent but highly theoretical treatments of the relationship between society and personality in George Herbert Mead's *Mind, Self and Society* and in William H. Kilpatrick's *Selfhood and Civilization*. Mead's book is difficult, but it will prove very rewarding to the student who has patience and ability to read it. Kilpatrick's book is easier, but also theoretical.

5. Harold Benjamin's *Saber Tooth Curriculum* is a delightful and penetrating analysis of the relationship between cultural change and the curriculum.



## CHAPTER THREE

# School and Community



The preceding chapter considered the culture as a whole. The question of how individuals take on the culture was discussed primarily in terms of what happens to them in their various statuses and roles as they participate informally in the activities of a simple society. But how does the culture impinge upon individuals in a more complex system? It is evident that there are many similarities between participating in a simple society and participating in a complex society such as that of the United States. In both cases a great deal of what is learned is acquired through informal activities and all sorts of associations in groups.

One of the groups through which the culture is transmitted to the individual is the community. The term "community" has several meanings. It is used to stand for an aggregate of people living in close physical proximity; for a collection of people living in the same geographic location and having many common beliefs and ways of behaving; for people bound together by common beliefs and sentiments whether they live in the same locality or are distributed over a large territory such as that of a nation or a set of nations. For example, the expression "community of Western nations" is sometimes used to refer to the nations of the Western world and to the fact that they share a common set of beliefs about freedom, equality, and justice as expressed in political and social institutions. Consistency of usage, however, is often lacking, and one must rely upon the context for the specific meaning that is intended. In the present chapter, "community" is used to mean a local residence area the inhabitants of which have, at least to some extent, certain basic ideas and ways of behaving in common.

In the next chapter we shall note how our increasing urbanization and industrialization are eroding much of the communality of ideas and values that once was

characteristic of the local residence area. Enough of this communality still remains, however, to justify an examination of its influence upon the individual and upon the school.

### THE NEED TO STUDY THE COMMUNITY

Why should the teacher study the community? The school is, of course, a part of the community. It is that part which has been established for the specific purpose of educating the immature members of society. No other agency is especially designed to serve this end. But we must bear in mind that there are many other community agencies and that in the course of carrying out their respective tasks each one exercises some educational influence. The primary task of the home is to bear the children and to rear them, but it also educates them. The church has as its primary goal the spiritual welfare of its members, but it, too, educates. The community government is set up to maintain order and to carry on certain necessary public activities, but in doing these things it incidentally teaches the immature members of the community about the ways in which the affairs of the people are managed. The work of the school is often reinforced by these community agencies. Just as often, however, these agencies counteract the effects of the school. In this event the school is frequently handicapped in attaining the results expected of it. In some instances the school is accused of producing the effects which flow from the very conditions hindering its work in the first place. For example, unthinking citizens may attribute an increase of juvenile delinquency to the schools, or they may criticize the schools for failing to reduce the delinquency rate. There is a great deal yet to be learned about the causes of delinquency, but on the basis of present knowledge it appears to be a function of certain social conditions over which the school has no control.

### EDUCATIVE EFFECTS OF THE COMMUNITY

The community in its entirety educates the immature. This statement is trite, but its significance is often not appreciated. A community that directed all its resources to the production of the best possible citizen would be a very different sort of community from any now existing. Unless the community's various enterprises and agencies are coordinated with respect to their educational effects, the educational results which its people want cannot be obtained. Of course, this coordination is never entirely accomplished. Business is run for business, agriculture for agriculture, and so on for all the major enterprises. But as educational leaders of a community, teachers are obligated to study the problems of coordination to help the community obtain the best education possible for its children.

In addition to the problem of coordination is the problem of deciding what is to be handled by community agencies and what is to be left for the school to teach. Industrialization and urbanization have created many new problems for the individual. These twin influences have also seriously modified old institutions, such as the home, making

their educative effects quite different from what they were a century ago. Thus the old division of responsibilities between the school and the community has undergone far-reaching changes. Year by year new questions arise as to what the school is to teach. Should it teach manners? Should it teach religion? Should it teach about sex? Should it teach about child-rearing? The questions seem to be endless. Now, by what criterion should the answers to such questions be decided? Is there a clear-cut rule by which we can decide what the school is and is not to teach? In order to deal with questions of this sort, the teacher will find it convenient, if not necessary, to be familiar with the general character of the community in modern society and the role of education in community life.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the school is itself a sort of community having a culture more or less its own. The teacher is, of course, an active participant in this embryonic community, and as such he shares a major responsibility for its quality. The more thoroughly he understands the structure and processes of community life the more able will he be to shape the life of the school.

The following are some of the questions which this chapter will help to answer:

1. Historically, what has been the chief function of the school?
2. What are the ways in which the community in its various ramifications educates its immature members?
3. What does a modern community expect of its school?
4. What happens when the responsibilities of the school are expanded?
5. What is life like inside the school?

Primitive societies, of course, had to educate their children; but they had no schools. Selection 6, by J. Crosby Chapman and George S. Counts, not only explains why schools were established but also suggests, through this very explanation, the fundamental tasks which the community expects the school to perform. Joseph K. Hart, in Selection 7, points out that, despite the existence of the school, the community itself remains the basic educative influence in the lives of its children and adults. Robert and Helen Lynd, in Selection 8, analyze some of the conflicting ideas and emotions about the work of the school current in a typical American community. This conflict has been enormously complicated and aggravated by the great expansion in the programs and functions of the school. Selection 9, from the Lynds' second study of "Middletown," depicts the growing controversy which has been engendered by this expansion and by the struggle among different social groups to shape the program of the school in accordance with their own interests and ideas. In the final selection of this chapter, Willard Waller shows that the school itself is a miniature social system with a culture of its own which in some degree shapes the opinions, attitudes, and behavior of both teachers and pupils.

## 6 • Why the School Was Established

As a society becomes increasingly complex, it also becomes increasingly specialized, separating into diverse occupational and social groups. A simple society has only the rudiments of an economic or a political system. Hence it lacks almost all the differentiations found in a complex state. The teaching function is performed largely through the participation of children in the various activities of the social group. In this way a simple society educates its young, but it does not have a separate institution called the school.

In the passage that follows, J. Crosby Chapman and George S. Counts depict education first as taking place in the simple state of societal evolution. Then they discuss it as the function of a specific institution created after society has reached a more complex stage of development. From this brief analysis the origin and early function of the school should become clear. Only against this background of social and educational evolution can the relation of the school to community life be seen in proper perspective.

As an individual process, education in its wider sense has existed since the appearance of the first organism possessing the property of learning. As a social process, education has existed since organisms possessing this property first associated in groups. Man has therefore experienced the process of education throughout his long career upon the earth. Wherever man reacts to some inadequacy in his environment, wherever man is subject to the influence of his fellows, the process of education advances. In a word, all living men are being educated. Depending on the operation of factors internal or external to the organism, here the process moves forward rapidly and there slowly.

### *Why Is Informal Education Adequate in Primitive Society?*

During the early history of mankind, education was directed by no conscious purpose. As a by-product of living, each individual born into the world gradually acquired those

forms of adjustment necessary in the relatively simple environment of his age. The young accompanied the parent as the latter moved about in search of edible roots or succulent berries, a wounded animal or a stranded fish. There were no highly specialized skills associated with the securing of food, nor were there complex processes involved in its preparation. Likewise, as with food, no specialized skills were demanded to satisfy the needs for shelter and clothing. Life was raw, simple, and direct. The acquisitions of the race were not many, and the action-system was not greatly extended beyond that of the higher animals. The adults were not conscious of the process of teaching, and the young acquired the little there was to be learned as they at an early age sought food, shelter, and clothing to satisfy their own organic cravings. Unaware of the process, they learned from the older members of the group and from the harder school of individual experience.

### *When Did Informal Education Become Inadequate?*

As social life became more complex, as successive generations added to the stock of skills and ideas: as man learned to control fire and apply it to the satisfaction of his wants; to fabricate robes, coats, and shoes to shield himself from the winds and frosts of winter; to construct traps, knives, and spears to increase and stabilize the food-supply; to fashion pots, kettles, and baskets to be used in cooking and transportation; to use the rudiments of speech as the basic instrument of thought and social coöperation,—as all these precious secrets were wrested one by one from nature, it became increasingly necessary for the adult members of the group to give explicit attention to the process of tuition lest some of the group-acquisitions be lost. When the first parent, with conscious intent, slowed up the productive process in order to facilitate and perfect the learning of the child, the beginnings of formal education were made. Education then became an end to which the more immediate demands of existence were subordinated. Under these conditions there was no clear line of cleavage between incidental and formal education. As the boy accompanied his father on a hunting expedition, or as the girl took part with her mother in the dressing and curing of game, these two forms of education went on side by side or in alternation.

### *Why Did Formal Education Precede the School?*

For ages the entire education of the young was gained through this participation in the life of the group. But during this period, without the assistance of any formal or specialized educational agency, the maturer members gave an ever increasing amount of attention and effort to the process of instruction. The conscious direction of learning greatly antedated the rise of the formal institution. There is a law of social evolution that the worth of a function must be demonstrated through the services of an unspecialized agency before a specialized agency is brought into existence in the social order.

Moreover, the beginnings of education may

be traced back to that generalized and undifferentiated source of all institutions, the primitive family, which performed all the functions necessary to the maintenance of social life. With its limited membership this small group could not establish a special agency for the performance of any special function, since the only possible division of labor was that which followed the line of sex. Any further differentiation waited upon the expansion of the group; and expansion, in turn, was dependent on the development of a technique to increase the food supply. So long as the social group remained small, however necessary the education of the immature may have appeared, it was quite impossible to devote the entire services of one of its few members to this special task. Such a differentiation of function would have involved the direction to this purpose of more of the energy of the group than could well be spared. The force of this argument is apparent when we consider that, even in our own extraordinarily wealthy society, we find it a burden to dedicate the talents of but one in a hundred of our number exclusively to the enterprise of education.

### *For What Ends Were the First Formal Educational Agencies Established?*

Probably the earliest manifestation of a formal educational agency with a conscious educational purpose centered around those individuals, of superior skill and knowledge, to whom the group had become accustomed to turn in times of crisis for its defense and perpetuation. A warrior or hunter of uncommon courage and skill was expected to give instruction not only to his own sons, but also to the sons of his kinsmen; and the matron of exceptional proficiency in the arts of the home and peace was called upon to serve the group by giving its daughters tuition in the deft performance of those duties allotted to her sex.

But it seems probable that the most systematic and thorough efforts at transmitting the acquisitions of the group to the younger generation grew up around religious belief and practice. Through this division of the social inheritance, surprisingly elaborate and intricate even among the most primitive of

peoples, man sought to determine the course of events in the world of sense by influencing through prayer, sacrifice, threat, or cajolery, the spirits and powers of an unseen world—a world which his primitive mind postulated as lying back of and controlling all the phenomena of nature. Here was a body of tradition that was looked upon as immeasurably precious, for it was thought to give control over those happenings, which though vital to group welfare, were not directly amenable to human influence. Through these practices they fondly thought to become masters of their own fate: to control the forces of life and death, to increase the number of their children and defer the approach of age, to check the ravages of disease and promote the blessings of health, to forestall the visits of famine and insure an abundance of food, to soften the rigors of winter and bring the warmth of spring, to determine the issue of battle and shape the ends of peace, and to give their souls safe convoy to a land of eternal bliss.

Little wonder that this heritage, so freighted with power over good and evil, was guarded with the most jealous care. Little wonder that there gradually evolved an order of specialists whose sole business was to preserve this lore and, through its use, to promote the welfare of the group. In the hands of the specialist, whether priest, shaman, medicine man, or magician, this body of tradition was gradually elaborated and consequently became, in yet greater measure, the unique possession of a class. This made necessary the formal organization of instruction about certain callings intimately associated with the life of the group. In one way or another, provision was made for the selection of promising youth who, under the direct tuition of the elders, were trained to discharge this important and esoteric social function. Out of this situation emerge the beginnings of professional training.

#### *How Did the Initiation Ceremony Foreshadow Universal Education?*

The earliest formal educational agencies affecting directly the entire membership of the group were in a sense complementary to those

agencies which were provided for the training of its leaders. Side by side with the development of the latter there appeared a considerable variety of ceremonies to which all the members of the group were submitted. Whether designed for the younger or older members, the great object of these ceremonies was social control. Certain of them, serving to initiate the youth into the fuller and wider life of the adult, were models of solemnity and were calculated to convey to the initiate the impression that the authority of the group, the authority of its customs, and the authority of its leaders, were absolute and binding on all its members. The entire proceedings bore a sanction that transcended the limits set by a single generation. Through feasting, fasting, fatigue, and elaborate ceremonial, and through appeal to supernatural sanction, the whole initiation was enveloped in an emotional mist that inhibited the process of thinking. Involving but little intellectual content and no thorough mastery of any tools of knowledge, this special form of exoteric education was directed to moral and social ends. Transmitting unchanged the inheritance of the group, this form of tuition stressed the great passive virtues of undivided loyalty and unswerving obedience. While a powerful conservative force in society, and necessary for group survival under the hard conditions of the time, it was undoubtedly a serious obstacle to change and progress.

#### *How Did the Development of Language Affect Education?*

With the refinement of the mechanisms of speech, by means of which increasingly delicate shades of meaning could be conveyed from one individual to another, and with the extension of the powers of speech through space and time by the invention of writing, the development of formal educational agencies was greatly stimulated. No longer dependent for their transmission on oral speech, the traditions, laws, and customs of the group were worked into clay, stone, or papyrus, and thereby given a permanence and an inflexibility which were previously lacking. The variable elements of individual experience and the imperfection of transmission, so long as

dependence on oral speech is complete, are certain to change both the form and the meaning, the letter and the spirit, of that which is handed down. But with the invention of writing, the dead hand of the past takes a firmer grip on the present and the written word becomes sacred. The natural conservatism of a primitive race drives it to find refuge in the thoughts, struggles, and achievements of past generations whose leaders become gods and humblest members demigods. Under these conditions education tends to become a worship of scripture, both error and truth are dressed in identical garb, and the folkways are hardened into a Mediaeval Europe or an Historic China. In such a world may be observed the perfect and final expression of the spirit of the initiation ceremony of the savage tribe.

The development of speech and writing, however, influenced education in other ways. The integration of mankind into those larger groups, in which great differentiation of structure and function is possible, was dependent on improved methods of recording and transmitting thought. The size of a group is definitely limited by the stage reached in the development of the means of communication. In a very real sense the modern world is built upon writing and reading. Thus, while the invention of writing was superficially conservative, seeming but to perpetuate the established order, it was fundamentally radical. Writing is the *sine qua non* for an enlarged social life, and ultimately the solvent of its own conservatism. This invention did much more than make possible the rigorous teaching and learning of the content of scripture; in time it made necessary the teaching of reading and writing. And, since these arts are not easily acquired, society was compelled to establish special agencies for the purpose of ensuring their acquisition.

At first the social need was met by training a few specialists to do all the reading and writing required by the group—to keep the records, to send and interpret messages, to make, transcribe, and decipher important documents. But even this limited use of written language promoted that widening of the

group and that complex organization of the political and economic life which in turn created an increased need for both reading and writing. This was a potent factor fostering the growth of the formal educational agency. With the passage of time, civilization becomes so dependent on written language that every fully functioning member of society is forced to master the rudiments of the literary arts. The ordinary tasks of life come to require the acquisition of the elementary phases of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Thus the school for the masses has naturally placed its great emphasis on the mastery of the tools of knowledge. And these arts have so placed their stamp on the school, and even on the idea of education, that to the uncritical mind to-day education is identified with literacy and book learning.

#### *How Has the Growth of the Great Society Made Necessary a New and Wider Conception of Education?*

This narrow conception of education and of the function of the school is undergoing rapid modification in the modern world. It no longer meets the educational needs of social life. On an ever-increasing scale those very forces, which in primitive times created the initiation ceremony and in a later age the reading and writing school, continue in operation. The life of the group is renewed from generation to generation, but always on a more complicated pattern, always with an enlarged experience. Consequently the generation that required only to be taught to read and write and figure has given place to one that must be introduced to the life of society in many of its aspects through the medium of a carefully prepared environment. Society has become a vast and intricate mechanism. At many points, its proper functioning requires the long and careful training of its members.

The world of to-day is based not only on reading and writing and arithmetic, but also on a great body of tested and refined experience regarding the working of the various forces which condition human existence. Man has evolved a method of studying this world which has created the ever-growing sciences

of physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, and sociology. From this body of refined and organized knowledge there flows to the race a constantly increasing number of benefits. In recent centuries man has learned that the world in which he lives is but a tiny speck in an unmeasured universe, and not the major and central part of creation; he has discovered that the history of the world can be measured only in geologic ages, and not in generations of men; he has found that he lives in a world of law, and not in a world of caprice. To this new world, this large world, this complex world, the child, without expert guidance and merely as an incident to the satisfaction of his own wants, can no longer make his adjustments.

Moreover, because of the development of the factory, the city, and the State, certain non-specialized educational agencies, such as the home, the community, and the church, which in the past have borne large educational burdens, are losing much of their vitality. And with the growth of our knowledge of psychology and with the clearer formulation of social ideals, attention has gradually come to focus on education as a means to the reconstruction of individual and social life. The school is thus gradually becoming a specialized environment through which every individual must pass, if he is to render the largest service to his fellows and enjoy to the full the advantages of life in the Great Society.

## 7 • How the Community Educates

When education is conceived not in school terms alone but in the broadest sense of community responsibility, it becomes clear that everything that takes place is fraught with educational potentialities. Thus, today, despite the existence of the school as a special agency of education, many of the important functions of education are still performed by the community.

Schooling is, of course, an important part of one's education, and in modern societies it is an indispensable part. Without the school, it is doubtful whether the complex, industrialized societies of today could continue to exist, for few if any individuals would be able to acquire the knowledge and skills required by the intricate social processes of modern society. But the fact must be faced that education today, as always, is broader than the school.

In the selection that follows, this fact is made abundantly clear. Here Joseph K. Hart, an educational philosopher who made an intensive study of the community as an agency of education, brings the reader face to face with the range of educational possibilities existing in every community. Not content with asserting that the community educates, he goes on to show in specific terms what it is about the community that educates—what associations, activities, and experiences are provided by the normal processes of community life.

[From Joseph K. Hart, *A Social Interpretation of Education*, 1929, pp. 247-254. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Co., Inc.]



We turn now, with such facts as we can collect and such imagination as we can muster to the inclusive problem of education today: How are we educated as a matter of realistic fact? We can never hope to have any critically valid notion as to what a *school* should be these days until we have found out what *education* actually is. The real task of the school, as already pointed out, is a function of the community's total educational responsibility.

When we escape from the narrow concept of school, we find ourselves in the presence of an enormously rich world of educational possibilities stretching away to the dawn of time and reaching to the bounds of the infinite. Schooling, of course, has some part to play in education and there is here no desire to minimize the facts in the case. But we must face *all the facts*; those dealing with the world outside the school as well as those having to do with school.

### EDUCATION BEFORE SCHOOL

The education of the individual begins with birth, or even before birth, and continues throughout life. The school provides a fraction of this totality of experience. Children live two, three, four, five, six years before they start to school. They live in the home, in the neighborhood, on the street, in the country village. They come and go with their parents, older brothers and sisters and friends; they take on language, habits, customs, attitudes. They lose themselves and begin to find themselves in their emotions. Their bodies are coordinated and the emotional patterns of their lives are incipiently developed. If we may believe modern psychology, the patterns of their lives are established before they ever enter a school house. They learn the rudiments of living, and though every such child is subject to the limitations of his own home and neighborhood, he has entered into and been subjected to enormous ranges of experiences before he ever starts to school. Education does not begin with schooling. Schooling takes up the task long after it is well begun.

### EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL YEARS

Assuming that the school day, lasts seven hours and that the school year is ten months long, we find the child in school 1,400 hours in a single year. (This has probably never been true of a single child.) At the same time if we assume that the child's waking day is fifteen hours long, he has 5,400 waking hours in a year. That means that he has 4,000 hours outside of school; or nearly three times as much time outside as in school. Some will argue that an hour spent in school is more effective in education than an hour spent out of school. This may be true of an occasional hour, but in general it can be argued that hour for hour, out-of-school experience is quite as influential in determining the ultimate outcome of the lives of most children as the hours spent in school. School may be more influential in the case of a few children—of an intellectual type.

If we add together the hours spent out of school in the first six years of life, the hours spent outside of school during the school years up to fourteen or eighteen, and then all the hours of life beyond the years of schooling, we shall see more vividly how slight a part of the individual's experience is the time actually spent in schooling. For most people school life represents no more than one-twentieth of their actual waking hours. The other nineteen-twentieths is "real" life, not academic. It seems preposterous that *education* should get no credit for these out-of-school hours!

### TYPES OF COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

Children, young people and adults alike are continually being educated, one way or another, by their contacts with each other, with social institutions and with objects, materials and events in their environment. Some of this education tends to compel more complete habituation to things as they are; some of it breaks through old attitudes, dissolves

old habits and understandings, and compels reconstruction of habit and outlook upon the world. No effort is here made, in presenting these elements of chaos, to differentiate these two aspects of education.

1. Individuals are educated by the home and family relationships, and all that gathers about the home, including visits to and from distant relatives, the tales of other days in the family and family festivals, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas. The home is still the most powerful single factor in education. Where the home has broken down, there education has largely broken down, and "schooling" has taken its place.

2. The neighborhood, whether real, fragmentary or merely a series of memories, educates us all. The varied homes, conflicting family customs, neighborhood gatherings, if any; neighborhood centers of interest, neighborhood play and social groups, neighborhood feuds—all these enter into and call out our more or less active responses. We are educated by the ways in which we respond to the stimulations of the world about us.

3. The playground, whatever its character, with its play and its games, both informal and organized, educates all who have any share in it, either actively or passively. Here may be found patterned activities and creative plays; crowded conditions which make actual play difficult or impossible, or such generous provision of space, equipment and leadership as may make play the most joyful thing in the world; large chance for participation under conditions that develop spirit, standards, "character," or the reverse. The youth of early Athens were educated in playgrounds, not in schools.

4. Nature educates us when we have access to it. The continuous variety of natural things—plants, animals, birds, growing crops, trees, soils; the contrasts of day and night; the procession of the seasons; the infinite variety of weather and climate; the starry heavens. Fire burns, bees sting, poison ivy must be avoided; the world of nature is inexhaustible: to some it leads on to the endless vistas of science; others find in it those "elevated thoughts" which Wordsworth celebrates; still others may be destroyed by its "natural" brutishness.

The banishment of nature from the modern city is the greatest loss to education the human race has ever suffered.

5. Religious institutions and activities educate. The church, the Sunday School, religious festivities, religious rivalries, religious antagonisms and hatreds, sacred music, celebrations, and many other phases of religious interest have had in the past and still have educative influence in the lives of millions of people. Even those who "have no interests" in religion are educated by their denials.

6. Work educates—work in the family, in the neighborhood, and in the community at large. Work was once more available to children and therefore it educated far more than it does to-day; many children grow up without much actual contact with work, to-day. But whether children work, or get out of work, work has its educative significance.

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7. Civic conditions of all kinds educate. The policeman, elections, Fourth of July, political parties, political rivalries, political and civic conversations and rumors—all have their share. Politics makes us burn with political ardor, or with sham enthusiasms, or turns us into cynics. Courses in civics in the schools may even have some bearing on the subject.

8. The street educates. The endless panorama of the crowd has inescapable effects upon us. Shop windows, showing materials and goods from all parts of the earth, and flaunting objects that we desire and cannot afford—all this educates us. The casual experiences of the street, accidental meetings, the sordid objects and activities; the traffic and the feelings of danger, order, security and triumph so often sensed—these too contribute. The back alley has its no less important influence upon us.

9. Travel educates. Early visits to other neighborhoods, to other parts of the city, and later visits to other cities and other parts of the country or to other lands—the sense of the world grows by what it feeds upon.

10. Beauty and ugliness all about us educate us. Our homes, our streets, our communities show us beauty or sordidness and tend to make us long for beauty or to be satisfied with

the sordid. The countryside, with its billboards shutting out the views, might give us beauty, though often it gives us little but echoes of the sordid city street.

11. Our group memberships educate us. When we belong to a group we grow into its being; when we belong to many groups we become rich with their offerings to us and filled with the conflicts engendered by them. When we are excluded from groups we suffer and compensate in more or less healthful ways; and we find happiness when we achieve memberships in social classes, racial groups and other stratifications and fraturings of the community. We are largely products of our group relationship. This aspect of our problem is so important, too, that we shall go into it at much greater length later.

12. We are educated by our experiences with authority or lack of it; by our dealings with arbitrary individuals; by orders imposed upon us, by efforts to control us, to break us, or to teach us; by our compliances and our resistances. Our responses to all these matters have large part in our final character.

13. We are educated by sicknesses, accidents, poverty, wealth, pains, defeats—and by

all experiences that compel us to consider the conditions under which we live. Under such compulsions we may even, at long odds, learn how to think a bit.

14. We are educated by punishments, rewards, temptations, vices, crimes, inventions, lies, fairy tales; by the suppressions and repressions enforced upon us by parents, brothers and sisters, teachers, institutions, the community. These educations are not always what we expect or what they purport to be; but education is there just the same.

15. We are educated by our longings, our friendships, our aspirations, our reverence, our satisfied and unsatisfied desires. Infinite distances and lonelinesses, as well as sheltered hours and real friendships, help to mold the ultimate patterns of our being.

16. We are educated by our reading: by newspapers, magazines, books, libraries, the wisdom and the filth of the printed page. We may think we escape, but *whatever touches us, educates us*, if we respond in any way to it.

These are a few of the many factors that enter into our real education. Schools play some part in all these matters—but never as much as school men would like to believe.

## 8 • "Middletown's" Attitude Toward Education

After the school has been set up to carry on those aspects of education which the community as a whole cannot perform, the people in due time forget that education was ever a function of the whole community. As time passes they look increasingly to the schools to perform the entire function of education. Thus the schools find it less and less possible to satisfy all the expectations of the public, and especially of the parents. Moreover, the task of the school is made doubly difficult by the fact that the public's notions of what the school should accomplish become quite different from those of the teachers.

Many teachers—particularly those in the secondary schools—think of their task primarily in terms of teaching the school subjects—mathematics, language, science, and social sciences. They aim at helping the students attain some degree of mastery of these subjects and some taste for learning and respect for scholarship. They assume that the

[From Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown*, copyright 1929 by Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., pp. 218-222. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

public shares the same purposes. But this is frequently not the case. The public generally does insist—often vociferously—that the school teach the three R's—by which they mean reading, penmanship and spelling, and simple arithmetic. But they have little interest in or respect for genuine scholarship. They have a certain respect for the intellectual—but they also mistrust him.

Actually, the public probably has no single expectation respecting the outcomes of schooling. This fact is made abundantly clear in the following paragraphs, which are taken from *Middletown*, one of the most significant sociological studies of this century. During the late 1920's, Robert and Helen Lynd made an intensive survey of Muncie, Indiana, interviewing many of its inhabitants to discover their attitudes, values, and opinions and to determine the social structure of the community. In the passage that follows, the attitudes of some of "Middletown's" inhabitants are presented.

Although the Lynds studied a single community, and almost thirty years ago, the general consensus among social scientists is that their findings on this point are still largely valid. Here it will be seen that the hopes of parents with respect to the schools vary from one social stratum to another. Indeed, they often vary within the same stratum. Some members of the community expect their children to learn to climb in the occupational scale; others stress the importance of good habits of work, the social graces, and patriotism; still others want their children to acquire something vaguely understood as culture; and so on from person to person and group to group.

In the light of the facts here presented, it would seem unsafe to assume that there is a unified public that knows what it wants of its schools. As will be seen later, the modern community is often divided within itself and must have the assistance of the teaching profession if it is to make wise decisions about the education of its children.

The relative disregard of most people in Middletown for teachers and for the content of books, on the one hand, and the exalted position of the social and athletic activities of the schools, on the other, offer an interesting commentary on Middletown's attitude toward education. And yet Middletown places large faith in going to school. The heated opposition to compulsory education in the nineties had virtually disappeared; only three of the 124 working-class families interviewed voiced even the mildest impatience at it. Parents insist upon more and more education as part of their children's birthright; editors and lecturers point to education as a solution for every kind of social ill; the local press proclaims, "Public Schools of [Middletown] Are the City's Pride"; woman's club papers speak

of the home, the church, and the school as the "foundations" of Middletown's culture. Education is a faith, a religion, to Middletown. And yet when one looks more closely at this dominant belief in the magic of formal schooling, it appears that it is not what actually goes on in the schoolroom that these many voices laud. Literacy, yes, they want their children to be able to "read the newspapers, write a letter, and perform the ordinary operations of arithmetic," but, beyond that, many of them are little interested in what the schools teach. This thing, education, appears to be desired frequently not for its specific content but as a symbol—by the working class as an open sesame that will mysteriously admit their children to a world closed to them, and by the business class as a heavily

sanctioned aid in getting on further economically or socially in the world.

Rarely does one hear a talk addressed to school children by a Middletown citizen that does not contain in some form the idea, "Of course, you won't remember much of the history or other things they teach you here. Why, I haven't thought of Latin or algebra in thirty years!" . . . And here the speaker goes on to enumerate what *are* to his mind the enduring values of education which every child should seize as his great opportunity: "habits of industry," "friendships formed," "the great ideals of our nation." Almost never is the essential of education defined in terms of the subjects taught in the classroom. One member of Rotary spoke with pitying sympathy of his son who "even brought along a history book to read on the train when he came home for his Christmas vacation—the poor overworked kid!"

Furthermore, in Middletown's traditional philosophy it is not primarily learning, or even intelligence, as much as character and good will which are exalted. Says Edgar Guest, whose daily message in Middletown's leading paper is widely read and much quoted:

God won't ask you if you were clever,  
For I think he'll little care,  
When your toil is done forever  
He may question: Were you square?

"You know the smarter the man the more dissatisfied he is," says Will Rogers in a Middletown paper, "so cheer up, let us be happy in our ignorance." "I wanted my son to go to a different school in the East," said a business-class mother, "because it's more cultured. But then I think you can have too much culture. It's all right if you're living in the East—or even in California—but it unfits you for living in the Middle West." Every one lauds education in general, but relatively few people in Middletown seem to be sure just how they have ever used their own education beyond such commonplaces as the three R's and an occasional odd fact, or to value greatly its specific outcome in others.

Some clew to these anomalies of the universal lauding of education but the disparagement of many of the particular things taught, and of the universal praise of the schools but the almost equally general apathy towards the people entrusted with the teaching, may be found in the disparity that exists at many points between the daily activities of Middletown adults and the things taught in the schools. Square root, algebra, French, the battles of the Civil War, the presidents of the United States before Grover Cleveland, the boundaries of the state of Arizona, whether Rangoon is on the Yangtze or Ganges or neither, the nature or location of the Japan Current, the ability to write compositions or to use semicolons, sonnets, free verse, and the Victorian novel—all these and many other things that constitute the core of education simply do not operate in life as Middletown adults live it. And yet, the world says education is important; and certainly educated men seem to have something that brings them to the top—just look at the way the college boys walked off with the commissions during the war. The upshot is, with Middletown reasoning thus, that a phenomenon common in human culture has appeared: a value divorced from current, tangible existence in the world all about men and largely without commerce with these concrete existential realities has become an ideal to which independent existence is attributed. Hence the anomaly of Middletown's regard for the symbol of education and its disregard for the concrete procedure of the schoolroom.

But the pressure and accidents of local life are prompting Middletown to lay hands upon its schools at certain points, as we have observed, and to use them instrumentally to foster patriotism, teach hand skills, and serve its needs in other ways. This change, again characteristically, is taking place not so much through the direct challenging of the old as through the setting up of new alternate procedures, *e.g.*, the adding to the traditional high school, offering only a Latin and an English course in 1890, of ten complete alternate courses ranging all the way from short-hand to home economics and mechanical

drafting. The indications seem to be that the optional newcomers may in time displace more and more of the traditional education and thus the training given the young will approach more nearly the methodically practical concerns of the group.

Lest this trend of education overtaking the life of Middletown appear too simple, however, it should be borne in mind that even while Middletown prides itself on its "up-to-date" schools with their vocational training, the local institutional life is creating fresh strains and maladjustments heretofore unknown: the city boasts of the fact that only 2.5 percent of its population ten years of age or older cannot read and write, and meanwhile the massed weight of advertising and professional publicity are creating, as pointed out above, new forms of social illiteracy, and the invention of the motion picture is introducing the city's population, young and old, week after week, into types of vivid experience which they come to take for granted as parts of their lives, yet have no training to

handle. Another type of social illiteracy is being bred by the stifling of self-appraisal and self-criticism under the heavily diffused habit of local solidarity in which the schools cooperate. An organized, professional type of city-boasting, even more forceful than the largely spontaneous, amateur enthusiasm of the gas boom days, has grown up in the shelter of national propaganda during the war. Fostered particularly by the civic clubs, backed by the Chamber of Commerce and business interests, as noted elsewhere, it insists that the city must be kept to the fore and its shortcomings blanketed under the din of local boasting—or new business will not come to town. The result of this is the muzzling of self-criticism by hurling the term "knocker" at the head of a critic and the drowning of incipient social problems under a public mood of everything being "fine and dandy." Thus, while education slowly pushes its tents closer to the practical concerns of the local life, the latter are forever striking camp and removing deeper into the forest.

## 9 • Conflict in "Middletown": Expansion of the School Program

As the preceding selection indicated, the public is far from unanimous in its conception of the role of the school. As new social needs and the resulting social pressures compel an expansion of the functions of the school, diversity of opinion as to the proper function of the school increases sharply. Seven years after the appearance of *Middletown*, the Lynds published a follow-up study, *Middletown in Transition*. The following passage, taken from this work, shows clearly how this diversity has sharpened and increased. It depicts the dissatisfaction and confusion with respect to the school, and the incessant struggle among social groups, cliques, and organizations to shape the educational outcomes in their own interests.

It should be remarked that these groups and organizations do not perceive their efforts in this way. They do not see themselves as striving to make the school serve their interests. This is a selfish view of the matter, and few if any individuals would assert that they act in terms of self-interest in regard to the school. What they do, of course, is follow the general tendency of all individuals to identify their own interests with the public good. In this way each party to the struggle sees itself as defending the interest of the community.

The plain fact is that in the modern community, as will be indicated more clearly in a later chapter, the public welfare or interest is not a well-defined idea shared alike by even a majority of individuals. It is not a given. Rather it is something that has to be worked out. And community struggle over question after question is but the process by which the modern community becomes aware of itself, its common interests, and its general public values.

The teacher is engaged in an enterprise that in an industrial society is necessarily controversial. The picture of the struggle for the school in "Middletown" makes this all too evident. The role of the teacher in such a struggle has yet to be clearly determined. But it is a distinct gain if the teacher comes to see that in the process of working out differences about education the role of the school in modern society is finally defined. By training, teachers are prone to look upon social conflict as an evil. Teachers thus tend to withdraw from community conflicts even when they concern the school. The task of learning to participate objectively in such community processes and to provide them with leadership and direction is one that the profession of teaching is now coming to recognize as being of paramount importance. A preliminary step in this direction involves becoming aware of the character of community conflicts over the school. It should be clear from the following analysis that these conflicts usually center about the purposes of education, although on the surface such matters as methods, discipline, and the so-called "fads and frills" are often the immediate objects of controversy.

According to the early American tradition the schools served as an extension and transmitter of the values upon which parents, teachers, religious and civic leaders were in substantial agreement. But during recent decades—as home, church, and community have each become in themselves areas of confused alternatives, and education has developed a professional point of view of its own, of the culture, but also somewhat *over against* the culture—it is not surprising that Middletown's schools have been becoming by quiet stages increasingly an area of conflict, an exposed focus of opposing trends in other social institutions, whose contradictions become more acute and threatening to Middletown as the shape and import of incipient immediate conflicts are magnified on the screen of the next generation.

There is conflict over the question of whose purposes the schools are supposedly fulfilling: Are these purposes those of the parent who wants education for *his* child in order that, through the acquisition of certain skills and knowledge or, more important, certain symbolic labels of an "educated person," he may achieve a larger measure of success than the parent himself has known? Or are they those of the citizen who wants, on the one hand, to have the fundamentals of community life, including its politico-economic mores, transmitted unchanged, and, on the other, to use the schools as an instrument of change sufficiently to bring any alien or backward children in the community up to these familiar standards? Or those of the teacher, with ideas derived from outside Middletown, loyal to a code of his own and obeying its philosophy?

Or those of the taxpayers, businessmen, and school board members, whose chief emphasis is on "successful" and "progressive" schools, to be sure, but within the limits of a practical, sound, unextravagant, budget? Or are they the purposes of any one of the pressure groups who want to teach the children patriotism, health, thrift, character building, religion,—or any one of the other values more or less accepted by the community as a whole but become an emotionally weighted "cause" with one special group?

Each of these vested interests exerts its special pressure on the schools. Language teachers may resent the intrusion of a course in hygiene as a required subject in the high school, while grade geography teachers may protest the drive to merge geography and history. To some parents the college laboratory school represents "the solution," while others regard it, according to the local press, as "an expensive, dangerous laboratory in which children are used instead of chemicals"; some parents hail it as "developing reasoning," "broadening the child's field of thought," and "teaching things that will be of practical use," while others lament that it "has no discipline," "encourages children to do nothing but play," and that "my child has studied nothing but history and hasn't had a spelling lesson all year." If parents trained in another era are at sea as regards the present elaborate high-school curriculum, they still think they know what an "elementary education" should be and feel that they can insist upon "essentials" there.

To quote a veteran worker with Middletown's children, "Our parents are realizing the increasingly sharp divergence of their world and that of their children today as never before." And the parents' world strikes back! In many cases they attempt to use the schools as a means of holding the two worlds together. A high-school course in sociology has been dropped because of parental protest over the fact that problems of sex were discussed in class. Over the heads of Middletown teachers, trained according to standards wider than some of the mores of Middletown, hangs at all times the sword of parental con-

servatism and anxiety. This is rendered the more difficult because, in manners and morals as well as economics, politics, and religion, the local community contains taxpaying parents of widely varying personal standards. The teacher knows and the community knows that the children ranged in their seats are wise in matters not in the curriculum, and that many of these children are rebelliously clamoring for the right to raise questions and to be outspoken in the face of the official and parental restraints. As one teacher said, "I am facing a new problem nowadays: My pupils insist on raising questions I dare not let them discuss though my conscience demands that I not clamp down on their honest questions. The things they say continually keep me on pins and needles for fear some of them will go home and tell their parents. I have an uneasy furtive sense about it all."

Middletown's emphasis upon education for the community values of group solidarity and patriotism was noted in the 1925 study. This concern, sharpened after the World War by America's realization of its closeness to the political turbulence of Europe and of the necessity for maintaining its own traditions, appears to have grown only slowly in Middletown in the latter years of the 1920's. American business in those years was prosperous and cocksure of its future and of the supremacy of the United States, and there was a sense of space and buoyant opportunity in the United States that made for latitude and tolerance. But the depression has again set the tide running strongly toward control of the schools "in the public interest." The restlessness and sense of "things being out of hand" that deepened as the depression ground its way through American life, forcing actions counter to some of the culture's deepest traditions, has prompted sharp renewal of the quietly tense struggle for control by two rival philosophies.

On the one hand, there is the belief, a natural outgrowth of the American individualistic and democratic tradition, that the schools should foster not only free inquiry but individual diversity, and that they best serve their



communities when they discover, and equip the individual to use, his emotional and intellectual resources to the fullest extent, in however diverse ways. Although professional educators are still searching for ways in which this can be done, this philosophy has gained wide acceptance among them, and is in some cases used as a defensive bulwark against repressive forces. It inevitably runs counter to another philosophy, far more often found in human societies, namely, that the function of the educational system is the perpetuation of traditional ways of thought and behavior, the passing on of the cultural tradition, and, if need be, the securing of conformity by coercion. When the Middletown school board approved the "new philosophy" in its 1927 program, it was approving the first of these, and it was probably quite unaware of the element of defense of educational freedom against repression inherent in such new programs. When, therefore, some Middletown teachers saw in the breakdown of old ways under the weight of the depression an opportunity to meet new times with new education, involving more and franker discussion of current problems, they began to run a neck and neck race with various agencies of control in the community which were demanding more rigidity and conformity in the form of new compulsory courses and a closer scrutiny of the content taught.

Paradoxically, Middletown teachers whose opinions exhibit any variations from the dominant values of the community appear to be at present in the equivocal position of never having been so free from purely educational restraints and yet at the same time so dangerously in jeopardy from the community. Proponents of the occasional outstanding liberal teacher boast quietly of the fact that he or she "is teaching really fine, thought-provoking things that make an impression on the student's thinking," and they add that "so far" the teacher has "got by" despite the rumblings of occasional objectors.

This seeming tolerance of more contradictory extremes within the culture is a familiar aspect of a culture between two eras, gone adrift from its earlier anchors and in

the process of being re-anchored by the competing groups in the culture. What one witnesses here is a common phenomenon met with in the course of social change. The adequacy of the old procedures comes gradually by imperceptible stages into question as experience and knowledge grow and conditions change. New elements in the culture, addressed to changed conditions, develop new philosophies, and different parts of the culture begin to operate along divergent and even in some cases contradictory lines. But the tendency of traditional control systems to overlook these subtle changes allows a wide measure of tolerance until some occurrence brings the conflict into the open and crystallizes the situation as a "public problem." Then the new elements favoring change, which have been growing bolder and more open in the pre-crisis weather of opinion which has included more and more open questioning, find themselves suddenly involved in a bitter process of "liquidation" by the aroused control system, provided the latter is still strong enough to enforce its will.

In Middletown the community pressure forces are mobilizing against dissent. Business knows what it wants. The patriotic groups know what they want. The D.A.R., always on a hair-trigger of watchfulness for "disloyalty," is reported to feel that both the high school and the college have "some pretty pink teachers"; and it is reported as characteristic of its activity that sons and daughters in the classrooms of suspected teachers have been enlisted to check up on the latter's teachings. When a social-science teacher in one of the high schools spoke favorably of joining the World Court, a local editorial warned that teachers ought to remember that the schools are supported by taxes. A State law, passed by the legislature in 1935 with the backing of the D.A.R., requires a new compulsory high-school course on the Federal Constitution.

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It cannot be stated too often that these restrictions upon "freedom" in education imposed by the control agencies of Middletown are applied for what are regarded as the best

interests of the culture. Middletown trusts education profoundly as a slogan—"I have never found a city economically sound which was not also educationally and spiritually sound," declared a popular speaker before the Lions Club—but it distrusts it at many points as an active reality. In its mellow moods Middletown likes to let its imagination run, and it praises education and envies the "educated man"; but in its more practical mood education must not be allowed to "get out of hand," and teachers are meager souls out of touch with life, the sort of people one can hire for the wages of a clerk in a retail store. At times Middletown can nod genially over such an editorial as the following, in which the editor momentarily "let himself go":

Somewhere along the way the brightness [of our children] gets worn off and the eagerness gets dulled, and instead of faith there comes disillusionment, and year by year the world's follies and stupidities are repeated by a tribe of adults who are not recognizably better than their fathers and mothers. . . . The welfare of the world depends ultimately on the emergence of people who are wiser and kinder and in all ways better folk than we ourselves are.

And in the next breath the community applauds wholeheartedly a speaker who, drawing back in dismay from the prospect that "whosoever captures the mind of the child controls the beliefs of the next generation," asserted: "The education we give our children should be limited to those matters on which there is substantial agreement among educated men of serious purpose." Of the two points of view, the latter more cautious one is usually uppermost. It is hard for adult Middletown to tolerate in its children—of all persons—more "wisdom" than it has, and it easily assumes that "educated men of serious purpose" would "agree substantially" with the views sensible men of affairs in Middletown hold. And these men, beset by social change and perplexity, see no occasion for speeding up change through "unsettling" young minds; rather, to quote a speaker ad-

ressing the high-school seniors on the advantages of a college education, "College helps one to success, by which I mean poise, serenity, and kindness in the acceptance of routine living. It teaches the mechanism of endurance." Here speaks not the voice of "education for individual differences" to the end that past "follies and stupidities . . . repeated by a tribe of adults who are not recognizably better than their fathers and mothers" may be avoided, but the sober voice of the *status quo* urging the new generation to bear without murmuring the world handed on to them.

Progressive teachers in Middletown are greeting with mixed emotions the announcement, in the fall of 1936, that "[Middletown] Schools Will Stress Teaching of Information about Local Facts and History." The announcement reads:

[Middletown] schools will stress the teaching of information about Middletown this year. Study of the community will include industries of the city, with something of their history, evolution, products, processes of manufacture, and markets; utilities; police and fire protection offered; form and machinery of the city's government; and other important elements affecting intelligent citizenship in the community. An illustrated booklet containing such information probably will be printed in school printshops and distributed to children without charge.<sup>1</sup>

One may view this simply as a move in the direction of an education based upon the realities of daily life that surround the child and moving out from these to the study of the wider world of institutions. And one may also view this as a phase of the militantly defensive civic self-consciousness with which Middletown is emerging from the depres-

<sup>1</sup> The project subsequently grew to include a dozen separate pamphlets. It may or may not be significant, in view of the strength and tactics of the local public utilities . . . , that the first pamphlets undertaken were devoted to electricity, to gas, and to water as they relate to the life of the city.

sion; as but another manifestation of the local control which is determined that there shall be no dissent in Middletown and that *our* town, *our* industries and public utilities, and *our* ways of doing things shall be accepted uncritically as right. There is much in the local scene to tempt one to this latter view.

The tightening of the conflict between the two philosophies of public education has resulted in a state of affairs in which mature, thoughtful, conscientious teachers not only fear what parents or organizations may say if they follow candidly the searching questions of their students, but in which a teacher discussing these problems with a colleague may interrupt the discussion by the apprehensive remark, "But I don't know whether I should discuss these things *even with you*." To the outside observer bent on appraising the weight of the power systems in the community, there seems little doubt, in view of the preponderance of power on the traditional side in Middletown, as to the direction which the immediate resolution of the present ambivalence in Middletown's education will take. If conditions of national and local strain continue even moderately sharp, Middletown's forward-looking teachers will either "tone down" their teaching or conceivably be quietly removed.

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While the issue of these various conflicting pressures bearing on the schools is far from settled, it would appear:

That the things people in Middletown may want of education as persons are not identical with the things the community as a competitive unit in an industrial economy wants.

That the old tendency to relative identity of the wants of persons, homes, churches, and community exists today less than at any time in the past.

That many of the ideologies that are currently taught in the schools are in conflict with "common sense" assumptions by which Middletown lives from day to day.

That the schools of the city, after swing-

ing out somewhat more freely in the 1920's on a course of their own, dictated by a philosophy of venturesome "education for individual differences," are being recaptured and harnessed bit by bit to the ends of a special type of unified culture.

That this culture which appears to be bending education to its special purposes is a culture dominated by a drive not for "individual differences" but for "community solidarity."

And that this community solidarity is being invoked primarily by the agencies of control under a philosophy which identifies community welfare with business welfare and sees solidarity as essential to the achievement of "business prosperity."

All of which, if this interpretation is correct, suggests a widening area of conflict in Middletown between the teacher and the educational administrator hired by the school board to "run" its schools; between school and community values; between parents who may want something other than docile conformity from the education of their children and the community bent upon achieving this solidarity; between the politico-economic pressure agencies and agencies for other types of pressure; and, above all, between the spirit of inquiring youth and the spirit of do-as-we-say-and-ask-no-questions.

The community places its greatest hope in its schools as instruments of "progress" when that progress is assumed to be a continuous straight-line development along the lines which Middletown understands and believes in: economic and material expansion under the familiar doctrine of "individual liberty." The community fears the schools as leading to change if this progress is along unknown and possibly "dangerous" lines which cannot be predicted and which may lead the young to ways unfamiliar to their fathers. It wants the schools to train more intelligent citizens, but it has a profound distrust of too much "cleverness" or novelty if applied to practical affairs. It wants character development but not to the point of raising ethical questions in regard to current group practices. Middle-

town has desired its schools to train its children for participation in the life of the community. But in a world in which the search for jobs has become—and may remain—more difficult than in the past, the schools must effectively delay this participation and become a place where adolescents and young adults may contentedly, and Middletown hopes fruitfully, spend their time as long as possible. This situation of prolonged schooling heightens the strains involved in the status of the young adult in Middletown, and also conflicts with the pressure to force students ahead as rapidly as possible from grade to grade through school and off the school budget.

The recapture of the educational system by agencies of community solidarity is facilitated not only by these ambivalences among parents and within different parts of the culture but also by the fact that the educators are themselves caught in the whirlpool of their own conflicting aims. Many of the external efficiencies proclaimed in the hundred-page bulletin, *Educational Planning in the [Middletown] Public Schools*, have been achieved at the expense of other alleged values of education. Despite the emphasis upon new imported "yardsticks of efficiency," and even because of them, some of the more perspicacious teachers state, "Our schools are just drifting, without adequate leadership"; and "Our very efficiency is a serious liability. We live in such a clutter of 'revising the curriculum' and 'keeping records' that the teaching of the bet-

ter teachers is suffering." The desire to achieve a standardized procedure widely acclaimed as desirable is frequently at sharp variance with the newly aroused sense of what education can mean in terms of individual development in actual present-day society.

Many of these conflicts are no doubt related to what Mr. Justice Brandeis has called in another connection "the curse of bigness." Middletown is now a city of nearly 50,000, handling a less and less selected group of children as compulsory school years lengthen and "everybody tries to go to college." As such it faces the necessity of more and more large-scale, routinized procedures; and there is no sector of our culture where the efficiency of large-scale routines is capable of being more antithetical to the spirit of the social function to be performed than in education. Likewise are such conflicts inevitable overtones, echoed in the sensitive reflector of the schools, of an era of change so rapid that it may be called a crisis era.

In such a period, it is natural for Middletown to attempt to resolve conflicts by grasping fixedly the points in its educational system which seem to offer the readiest means of measuring success and the greatest assurance of stability. And in the struggle between quantitative administrative efficiency and qualitative educational goals in an era of strain like the present, the big guns are all on the side of the heavily concentrated controls behind the former.

## 10 • The Sociology of the School

If one were asked where in the school learning occurs, he would likely point to the classroom. This response is, of course, correct. The classroom is that part of the school especially designed for teaching and learning. But just as it would be erroneous to assert that all learning that takes place in the community occurs in the school, so it would be erroneous to assume that learning in the school is limited to the classroom. The school is itself a social system in which individuals are associated in all sorts of ways, not merely

as teacher and pupil. There are social organizations, formal and informal, among the students—cliques, clubs, councils, home rooms, and the like. There are also all sorts of cooperative and competitive activities in which virtually every student is involved directly or indirectly. Moreover, the school, like the community, is organized for the purpose of maintaining order and peace within its domain. The student is expected to conform to the rules and procedures by which the school carries on its functions. Thus the school is itself a social system in which students and teachers participate, just as they participate in social activities outside the school. Like the community, the social system that is the school educates those who participate in it.

When this simple fact is understood, a number of questions arise. How should the school be organized and governed? Should its government be patterned after that of the actual community or after that of the ideal community of which the actual one is but a shadow? Should life be like that of a typical community or should it be refined and purified so as to represent as nearly as possible a model of social existence? Those who are responsible for the operation of the school cannot evade these questions. In any event, the school must be organized and managed, and in so doing the teachers necessarily give an answer to the questions entailed by the fact that the school is itself an embryonic community.

To understand the total effect of the school as a social system, we must understand the culture of the school itself. In the preceding chapter it was noted that a culture is an environment shaped by man himself. It consists of symbols, meanings, folkways, taboos, rituals, and so forth. Now, it takes only a modicum of reflection to see that the school is a miniature cultural system and that this culture, like the culture of society in general, is taken on by both students and teachers.

The following selection, from a well-known work in educational sociology, by Willard Waller, is perhaps the best analysis of the school as a social system to be found in the literature. The first part of the selection depicts the network of social relations in the school in such a way as to reveal the power of the total educative influence of the school and to make clear the point that the teacher should be as much concerned with school organization and operation as he is with his own classroom. The second part of the selection describes the internal culture of the school.

The school is a closed system of social interaction. Without pedantry, we may point out that this fact is of importance, for if we are to study the school as a social entity, we must be able to distinguish clearly between school and not-school. The school is in fact clearly differentiated from its social milieu. The existence of a school is established by the emergence of

a characteristic mode of social interaction. A school exists wherever and whenever teachers and students meet for the purpose of giving and receiving instruction. The instruction which is given is usually formal classroom instruction, but this need not be true. The giving and receiving of instruction constitutes the nucleus of the school as we now think of

[From Willard Waller, *The Sociology of Teaching*, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1932, pp. 6-13, 103-119. Reprinted by permission.]

it. About this nucleus are clustered a great many less relevant activities.

When we analyze existing schools, we find that they have the following characteristics which enable us to set them apart and study them as social unities:

1. They have a definite population.
2. They have a clearly defined political structure, arising from the mode of social interaction characteristic of the school, and influenced by numerous minor processes of interaction.
3. They represent the nexus of a compact network of social relationships.
4. They are pervaded by a we-feeling.
5. They have a culture that is definitely their own.

The school has, as we have said, a definite population, composed of those who are engaged in the giving or receiving of instruction, who "teach" or "are in school." It is a relatively stable population and one whose depletion and replacement occur slowly. Population movements go according to plan and can be predicted and charted in advance. A bimodal age distribution marks off teachers from students. This is the most significant cleavage in the school.

The young in the school population are likely to have been subjected to some sifting and sorting according to the economic status and social classification of their parents. The private schools select out a certain group, and there are specializations within the private schools, some being in fact reformatories for the children of the well-to-do, and some being very exacting as to the character and scholastic qualifications of their students. The public schools of the exclusive residence district are usually peopled by students of a limited range of social types. Slum schools are for slum children. Country schools serve the children of farmers. In undifferentiated residence districts and in small towns which have but one school the student population is least homogeneous and most representative of the entire community.

The teaching population is probably less

differentiated. In part, this is because the variation from the teacher type must be limited if one is to teach successfully. There is nevertheless considerable variation in the training and ability of teachers from one school to another and one part of the country to another. Teachers the country over and in all schools tend to be predominantly selected from the rural districts and from the sons and daughters of the lower middle classes. The teaching population is in some schools more permanent than the student population. There is nevertheless a large turnover among the teachers.

The characteristic mode of social interaction of the school, an interaction centered about the giving and receiving of instruction, determines the political order of the school. The instruction which is given consists largely of facts and skills, and of other matter for which the spontaneous interests of students do not usually furnish a sufficient motivation. Yet teachers wish students to attain a certain mastery of these subjects, a much higher degree of mastery than they would attain, it is thought, if they were quite free in their choices. And teachers are responsible to the community for the mastery of these subjects by their students. The political organization of the school, therefore, is one which makes the teacher dominant, and it is the business of the teacher to use his dominance to further the process of teaching and learning which is central in the social interaction of the school.

Typically the school is organized on some variant of the autocratic principle. Details of organization show the greatest diversity. Intra-faculty relations greatly affect the relations between teachers and students. Where there is a favorable rapport between the teachers and the administrative authorities, this autocracy becomes an oligarchy with the teacher group as a solid and well-organized ruling class. It appears that the best practice extends the membership in this oligarchy as much as possible without making it unwieldy or losing control of it. In the most happily conducted institutions all the teachers and some of the leading students feel that they have a very real voice in the conduct of school affairs.

Where there is not a cordial rapport between school executives and teachers, control becomes more autocratic. A despotic system apparently becomes necessary when the teaching staff has increased in size beyond a certain limit. Weakness of the school executive may lead him to become arbitrary, or it may in the extreme case lead some other person to assume his authority. The relationship between students and teachers is in part determined by intra-faculty relationships; the social necessity of subordination as a condition of student achievement, and the general tradition governing the attitudes of students and teachers toward each other, set the limits of variation. But this variation is never sufficient to destroy the fact that the schools are organized on the authority principle, with power theoretically vested in the school superintendent and radiating from him down to the lowest substitute teacher in the system. This authority which pervades the school furnishes the best practical means of distinguishing school from not-school. Where the authority of the faculty and school board extends is the school. If it covers children on the way to and from school, at school parties, and on trips, then those children are in school at such times.

The generalization that the schools have a despotic political structure seems to hold true for nearly all types of schools, and for all about equally, without very much difference in fact to correspond to radical differences in theory. Self-government is rarely real. Usually it is but a mask for the rule of the teacher oligarchy, in its most liberal form the rule of a student oligarchy carefully selected and supervised by the faculty. The experimental school which wishes to do away with authority continually finds that in order to maintain requisite standards of achievement in imparting certain basic skills it has to introduce some variant of the authority principle, or it finds that it must select and employ teachers who can be in fact despotic without seeming to be so. Experimental schools, too, have great difficulty in finding teachers who are quite free from the authoritarian bias of other schools and able to treat children as inde-

pendent human beings. Military schools, standing apparently at the most rigid pole of authority, may learn to conceal their despotism, or, discipline established, may furnish moments of relaxation and intimate association between faculty and students, and they may delegate much power and responsibility to student officers; thus they may be not very much more arbitrary than schools quite differently organized, and sometimes they are very much less arbitrary than schools with a less rigid formal structure. The manifestations of the authority principle vary somewhat. The one-room country school must have a different social structure from the city high school with five thousand students, but the basic fact of authority, of dominance and subordination, remains a fact in both.

It is not enough to point out that the school is a despotism. It is a despotism in a state of perilous equilibrium. It is a despotism threatened from within and exposed to regulation and interference from without. It is a despotism capable of being overturned in a moment, exposed to the instant loss of its stability and its prestige. It is a despotism demanded by the community of parents, but specially limited by them as to the techniques which it may use for the maintenance of a stable social order. It is a despotism resting upon children, at once the most tractable and the most unstable members of the community.

There may be some who, seeing the solid brick of school buildings, the rows of nicely regimented children sitting stiff and well behaved in the classroom or marching briskly through the halls, will doubt that the school is in a state of unstable equilibrium. A school may in fact maintain a high morale through a period of years, so that its record in the eyes of the community is marred by no untoward incident. But how many schools are there with a teaching body of more than—let us say—ten teachers, in which there is not one teacher who is in imminent danger of losing his position because of poor discipline? How many such schools in which no teacher's discipline has broken down within the last three years? How many school executives would dare to plan a great mass meeting of students

at which no teachers would be present or easily available in case of disorder?

To understand the political structure of the school we must know that the school is organized on the authority principle and that that authority is constantly threatened. The authority of the school executives and the teachers is in unremitting danger from: (1) The students. (2) Parents. (3) The school board. (4) Each other. (5) Hangers-on and marginal members of the group. (6) Alumni. The members of these groups, since they threaten his authority, are to some extent the natural enemies of the person who represents and lives by authority. The difficulties of the teacher or school executive in maintaining authority are greatly increased by the low social standing of the teaching profession and its general disrepute in the community at large. There is a constant interaction between the elements of the authoritative system; the school is continually threatened because it is autocratic, and it has to be autocratic because it is threatened. The antagonistic forces are balanced in that ever-fickle equilibrium which is discipline.

Within the larger political order of the school are many subsidiary institutions designed to supplement, correct, or support the parent institution, drawing their life from it and contributing in turn to its continued existence. These institutions are less definitely a part of the political structure, and they mitigate somewhat the rigidity of that structure by furnishing to students an opportunity for a freer sort of social expression. These ancillary institutions are organizations of extra-curricular activities, and comprise such groups as debating societies, glee clubs, choral societies, literary societies, theatrical groups, athletic teams, the staff of a school paper, social clubs, honorary societies, fraternities, etc. They are never entirely spontaneous social groupings but have rather the character of planned organizations for which the major impetus comes from the faculty, generally from some one member of the faculty delegated to act as "faculty adviser." These "activities" are part of that culture which springs up in the school from the life of students or is

created by teachers for the edification of students. Such groups are often hardly less pervaded by faculty control than classroom activities, and there seems a tendency for the work of such institutions to be taken over by the larger social structure, made into courses and incorporated into the curriculum. Perhaps the worst that can happen to such organizations, if they are viewed as opportunities for the spontaneous self-expression of students, is that they shall be made over into classes. But the school administrator often thinks differently; from his point of view, the worst that can happen to such groups is that they shall become live and spontaneous groups, for such groups have a way of declaring their independence, much to the detriment of school discipline.

The school is the meeting-point of a large number of intertangled social relationships. These social relationships are the paths pursued by social interaction, the channels in which social influences run. The crisscrossing and interaction of these groups make the school what it is. The social relationships centering in the school may be analyzed in terms of the interacting groups in the school. The two most important groups are the teacher-group and the pupil-group, each of which has its own moral and ethical code and its customary attitudes toward members of the other groups. There is a marked tendency for these groups to turn into conflict groups. Within the teacher group are divisions according to rank and position, schismatic and conspiratorial groups, congenial groups, and cliques centering around different personalities. Within the student groups are various divisions representing groups in the larger community, unplanned primary groups stair-stepped according to age, cliques, political organizations, and specialized groups such as teams and gangs. The social influence of the school is a result of the action of such groups upon the individual and of the organization of individual lives out of the materials furnished by such groups.



The school is further marked off from the world that surrounds it by the spirit which pervades it. Feeling makes the school a social unity. The *we*-feeling of the school is in part a spontaneous creation in the minds of those who identify themselves with the school and in part a carefully nurtured and sensitive growth. In this latter aspect it is regarded as more or less the property of the department of athletics. Certainly the spirit of the group reaches its highest point in those ecstatic ceremonies which attend athletic spectacles. The group spirit extends itself also to parents and alumni.

A separate culture, we have indicated, grows up within the school. This is a culture which is in part the creation of children of different age levels, arising from the breakdown of adult culture into simpler configurations or from the survival of an older culture in the play group of children, and in part devised by teachers in order to canalize the activities of children passing through certain ages. The whole complex set of ceremonies centering around the school may be considered a part of the culture indigenous to the school. "Activities," which many youngsters consider by far the most important part of school life, are culture patterns. The specialized culture of the young is very real and satisfying for those who live within it. And this specialized culture is perhaps the agency most effective in binding personalities together to form a school.

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### INTERNAL CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL

Teachers have always known that it was not necessary for the students of strange customs to cross the seas to find material. Folklore and myth, tradition, taboo, magic rites, ceremonials of all sorts, collective representations, *participation mystique*, all abound in the front yard of every school, and occasionally they creep upstairs and are incorporated into the more formal portions of school life.

There are, in the school, complex rituals of

personal relationships, a set of folkways, mores, and irrational sanctions, a moral code based upon them. There are games, which are sublimated wars, teams, and an elaborate set of ceremonies concerning them. There are traditions, and traditionalists waging their world-old battle against innovators. There are laws, and there is the problem of enforcing them. There is *Sittlichkeit*. There are specialized societies with a rigid structure and a limited membership. There are no reproductive groups, but there are customs regulating the relations of the sexes. All these things make up a world that is different from the world of adults. It is this separate culture of the young, having its locus in the school, which we propose to study. To work out all the details of this culture would be a task long and difficult, and, for our purpose, not altogether necessary. We shall be content to mark out the main lines of the cultural background of school life.

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Certain cultural conflicts are at the center of the life of the school. These conflicts are of two sorts. The first and most obvious is that which arises from the peculiar function of the school in the process of cultural diffusion. A conflict arises between teachers and students because teachers represent the culture of the wider group and students are impregnated with the culture of the local community. Where the differences concern matters of religion or of fundamental morality, the struggle which then ensues may become quite sharp and may seriously affect the relation of the school to the community. A second and more universal conflict between students and teachers arises from the fact that teachers are adult and students are not, so that teachers are the bearers of the culture of the society of adults, and try to impose that culture upon students, whereas students represent the indigenous culture of the group of children.

The special culture of the young grows up in the play world of childhood. It is worth while to note that it arises in the interstices of the adult social world. Thrasher's *The Gang* is a study of the conflict between the estab-

lished social order and the interstitial group which has sprung up and grown strong in the sections of society where the adult order does not hold. But this is by no means a complete explanation of the behavior norms of childhood groups. Another fact of importance is that the child does not experience the world in the same manner as does the adult. The child perceives the world differently from the adult in part because he sees it in smaller and simpler configurations. The adult sees social situations as falling into certain highly complex configurations; the child, with a simpler mental organization, does not see these, but breaks up his sensory data into different wholes. The sensory patterns of childhood, then, arise in part from imperfectly experienced adult situations. What the child appropriates from the cultural patterns around him must always be something which it is within his power to comprehend. This is usually one of the simpler and more elementary forms of adult behavior, as the criminal behavior followed out by the gang, or it is a split-off part of a more complex whole common in the culture of adults.

Though an enlightened pedagogy may ameliorate the conflict of adults and children, it can never remove it altogether. In the most humane school some tension appears between teacher and students, resulting, apparently, from the role which the situation imposes upon the teacher in relation to his students. There are two items of the teacher's duty which make it especially likely that he will have to bring some pressure to bear upon students: he must see to it that there is no retrogression from the complexity of the social world worked out for students of a certain age level, and he must strive gradually to increase that complexity as the child grows in age and approximates adult understanding and experience. Activities may reduce conflict, but not destroy it.

Children have something which can be regarded as a culture of their own. Its most important loci are the unsupervised play group and the school. The unsupervised group

presents this culture in a much purer form than does the school, for the childish culture of the school is partly produced by adults, is sifted and selected by adults, and is always subject to a certain amount of control by teachers. The culture of the school is a curious melange of the work of young artisans making culture for themselves and old artisans making culture for the young; it is also mingled with such bits of the greater culture as children have been able to appropriate. In turning to more concrete materials, we may note certain aspects of tradition in the school. It will illustrate well this mingling of cultures if we divide the tradition which clusters about the school into three classes: tradition which comes entirely, or almost entirely, from the outside; tradition which is in part from outside the school and in part indigenous; and tradition which is almost entirely indigenous. It is roughly true that tradition of the first class exists in the community at large, that of the second class among teachers, and that of the third class among students.

Tradition of the first class, that which for the particular school comes altogether from the outside, is a manifestation of a culture complex diffused throughout the whole of West European culture. The historic school has of course had a part in the formation of this complex, but any particular school is largely the creation of it. Tradition of this sort governs the very existence of schools, for, without such a culture complex, schools would not exist at all. This traditional culture complex governs also the general nature of the life in the schools. It determines that the old shall teach the young, and not that the young shall ever teach the old, which would be at least equally justifiable in a world that changes so rapidly that an education twenty years old is out of date. Tradition governs what is taught and it holds a firm control upon the manner in which it is taught. Tradition determines who shall teach; we have already discussed some of the traditional requirements for teaching. It is this same sort of tradition also which largely determines how students and teachers shall think of each other.

The best example of a mingled tradition in part absorbed from the general culture of the group and in part produced in the particular institution is the tradition of teachers. In so far as this tradition of teachers is derived from outside a particular school, it is drawn by teachers from the general culture, and from association with members of the teaching profession everywhere. In so far as it is a purely local product, it is produced by the teachers in the institution and is passed on from one teacher to another. We may mention some cardinal points of the teacher tradition as it is usually encountered, making due allowance for local variations. There is a teacher morality, and this morality regulates minutely the teacher's relations with his students and with other teachers; it affects his relations with other teachers especially where the standing of those teachers with students might be affected. There is a character ideal of the teacher; nearly every group which lives long in one stereotyped relation with other groups produces its character ideal, and this ideal for teachers is clearly observable. When teachers say of a colleague, "He's a school teacher," they mean that he conforms to this local character ideal. (It usually implies that the individual puts academic above other considerations, is conscientious in his duties, and exacting in the demands he makes upon himself and others.) There is a taboo on seeking popularity among students, and this taboo operates with dreadful force if it is thought that popularity seeking is complicated by disloyalty to the teacher group. There is a traditional attitude toward students; this attitude requires that a certain distance be kept between teachers and students. The desire to be fair is very likely not the strongest motive that teachers have for keeping students at a distance, but it is certainly one of the consequences of the policy, and it has in its own right the compelling value of an article of faith. None may violate the code of equality with impunity. Teachers have likewise a certain traditional attitude toward each other. The most obvious manifestation of this traditional attitude is the ceremoniousness of teachers toward each other and toward the

administration of the school. It seems clear that this is the ceremoniousness of a fighting group which does not care to endanger its prestige with underlings by allowing any informality to arise within itself. Another interesting observation that has often been made about particular groups of teachers is that they discriminate markedly between veterans and new men. This distinction is in the folkways. Occasionally there is a more or less definite ceremony of initiation, more rarely, actual hazing.

The indigenous tradition of the school is found in its purest form among students. This tradition, when it has been originated on the spot, is passed on, largely by word of mouth, from one student to another. Some of the indigenous tradition has been originated by the faculty, and then imposed upon the students; once it has been accepted by students, however, it may be passed on by student groups. Some of the traditional observances which students follow are not home-grown; there is a great literature of school life, and students occasionally appear who are obviously playing the parts of story-book heroes. Besides, there exists in the culture of any community a set of traditional attitudes toward school and school life, varying from one social class to another, and from family to family; these attitudes influence profoundly the attitudes which students have toward school life. Nevertheless the tradition of students is very largely indigenous within the particular school. Although this sort of tradition varies much in detail from one school to another, we may mention certain characteristics of the fundamental patterns.

Like teacher morality, student morality is the morality of a fighting group, but differences appear in that the student group is subordinate, and its morality is relevant to that situation. Social distance between student and teacher seems as definitely a part of the student code as of the teacher code. The student must not like the teacher too much, for that is naivete. There is the well-known school-boy code, the rule that students must never give information to teachers which may lead to the punishment of another student. Cer-

tain folkways grow up in every group of school children, as the folkway of riding to grade school on a bicycle or of not riding to high school on a bicycle, and these folkways have a great influence over the behavior of all members of the group. These groups of children are arranged in stair-steps. Membership in the older group implies repudiation of the folkways of the younger group. No one more foolish than the high-school boy on a bicycle, or the college boy wearing a high-school letter! Interlocking groups look forward only, each group aping its elders and despising its juniors. In modern schools, there is a whole complex of traditions pertaining to activities; it seems that all activities are meritorious, that they are in some way connected with the dignity and honor of the school, that some activities are more meritorious than others.

Sometimes a whole social system is carried in the tradition of students, and such social systems are very resistant to change. The fagging system, or a system of any sort of hazing, may persist for decades against the best efforts of highly efficient teachers and administrators to change them. A collegiate institution comes to mind which has conducted such a struggle for upwards of a hundred years. We are led to believe that hazing, at least, having its roots in the desire of those already in the group to dominate new members (and having its parallel on the faculty), would be destined to have some place in the culture which the young work out for themselves even if it had no sanction in tradition. In other words, the manner in which the young experience the universe recreates a hazing problem in every generation of students.

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The cultural anthropologists have taught us to analyze the actions of human beings living in a certain culture into culture patterns. Those partially formalized structures of behavior known as "activities" will serve as excellent examples of culture patterns existing in the school. Among the "activities" to be found in most public schools may be mentioned athletics, work on the school paper, oratory and debating, glee club work, Hi-Y

work, dramatics, participation in social clubs, departmental clubs, literary societies, fraternities, etc. Each of these activities may be thought of as representing a more or less ritualized form of behavior carried out by the individual as a member of a group and, often, a representative of the larger group. There is a set form for these activities. There is merit in these activities, and that merit seems to rest ultimately upon the notion that group welfare and group prestige are involved in them; the honor of the high school is damaged if the team loses. ("Our team is our fame-protector. On boys, for we expect a touchdown from you—" is unpoetic, but explicit on this point.) But there is intrinsic, irrational merit in them, too, as in the trading of the Trobriand Islanders. There is distinction in these activities for individuals. That distinction rests in part upon the prominence which participation in them gives the individual in the eyes of the school at large, and in part upon the recognition which the adult group accords them. The variety of activities is almost endless, for each of the activities mentioned above has many subdivisions; these subdivisions are sometimes arranged in something of a hierarchy as in athletics, where the greatest distinction attaches to football, a little less to basketball, less yet to baseball and track. These activities are commonly justified on the grounds that they actually prepare for life, since they present actual life situations; their justification for the faculty is in their value as a means of control over restless students. It is noteworthy that a competitive spirit prevails in nearly all activities. Not all activities are really competitive, but the struggle for places may make them so, and the desirability of having some place in some school activity makes the competition for places keen. One "makes" the school orchestra or glee club quite as truly as one makes the football team.

These culture patterns of activities are partly artificial and faculty-determined, and partly spontaneous. In so far as they have been evolved by the faculty, they have been intended as means of control, as outlets for adolescent energies or substitutes for tabooed activities. They represent also the faculty's at-

tempt to make school life interesting and to extend the influence of the school. Any activity, however, which is to affect the life of students at all deeply, any activity, then, which aspires to a greater influence than is exerted by the Latin Club or the Cercle Français, must have a spontaneous basis, and must appeal to students by presenting to them behavior patterns of considerable intrinsic interest. Each activity usually has some sort of faculty connection, and the status of the faculty adviser is thought to rise or fall with the prosperity or unprosperity of the activity which he promotes. Activities, then, increase in importance and gain recognition from the faculty through the efforts of interested faculty members, as well as through their own intrinsic appeal to students. (A change is taking place in our teacher idiom. The young teacher now refers to himself not as the teacher of a certain subject, but as the coach of a certain activity.)

Of all activities athletics is the chief and the most satisfactory. It is the most flourishing and the most revered culture pattern. It has been elaborated in more detail than any other culture pattern. Competitive athletics has many forms. At the head of the list stands football, still regarded as the most diagnostic test of the athletic prowess of any school. Then come basketball, baseball, track, lightweight football, lightweight basketball, girls' basketball, girls' track, etc. Each of these activities has importance because the particular school and its rivals are immersed in a culture stream of which competitive athletics is an important part. Each school has its traditional rivals, and a greater psychic weighting is attached to the games with traditional rivals than to those with other schools. Schools are arranged in a hierarchy, and may therefore win moral victories while actually suffering triumphs.

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The code of sportsmanship becomes a very important ethical principle, one almost says the very source and spring of all ethics, for youngsters and for those adults who hold to the conflict theory of human life. There are

men who insist that they learned the most important lessons of life upon the football field. They learned to struggle there and to hold on, and they learned to respect the rights of others and to play according to the rules. It may be surmised that men who have such a conception of life do not live in a very complex world. It is difficult to generalize about the effect of athletics upon the personalities of those participating. One might guess that it is in general favorable, and that its favorable effects are in the line of a growing into such roles as those mentioned above. Part of the technique, indeed, of schools and teachers who handle difficult cases consists in getting those persons interested in some form of athletics. This constitutes a wholesome interest, opens the way to a normal growth of personality, and inhibits abnormal interests and undesirable channels of growth.

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The author would be inclined to account for the favorable influence of athletics upon school life in terms of changes effected in group alignments and the individual attitudes that go with them. It is perhaps as a means of unifying the entire school group that athletics seem most useful from the sociological point of view. There is a tendency for the school population to split up into its hostile segments of teachers and students and to be fragmented by cliques among both groups. The division of students into groups prevents a collective morale from arising and thereby complicates administration; the split between students and teachers is even more serious, for these two groups tend to become definite conflict groups, and conflict group tensions are the very antithesis of discipline. This condition athletics alleviates. Athletic games furnish a dramatic spectacle of the struggle of

this is a powerful factor in building up a group spirit which includes students of all kinds and degrees and unifies the teachers and the taught. In adult life we find the analogue of athletics in war; patriotism runs high when the country is attacked. Likewise we find the most certain value of punishment

to be the unification of the group which punishes. Athletic sports use exactly the same mechanism in a controlled way for the attainment of a more limited end.

By furnishing all the members of the school population with an enemy outside the group, and by giving them an opportunity to observe and participate in the struggle against that enemy, athletics may prevent a conflict group tension from arising between students and teachers. The organization of the student body for the support of athletics, though it is certainly not without its ultimate disadvantages, may bring with it certain benefits for those who are interested in the immediate problems of administration. It is a powerful machine which is organized to whip all students into line for the support of athletic teams, and adroit school administrators learn to use it for the dissemination of other attitudes favorable to the faculty and the faculty policy.

In yet another way an enlightened use of athletics may simplify the problem of police work in the school. The group of athletes may be made to furnish a very useful extension of the faculty-controlled social order. Athletes have obtained favorable status by following out one faculty-determined culture pattern; they may be induced to adopt for themselves and to popularize other patterns of a similar nature. Athletes, too, in nearly any group of youngsters, are the natural leaders, and they are leaders who can be controlled and manipulated through the medium of athletics. Those who are fortunate enough to be on the squad of a major sport occupy a favored social position; they are at or near the center of their little universe; they belong to the small but important group of men who are doing things. They have much to lose by misconduct, and it is usually not difficult to make them see it. They have, too, by virtue of their favored position, the inevitable conservatism of the privileged classes, and they can be brought to take a stand for the established order. In addition, the athletes stand in a very close and personal relationship to at least one faculty member, the coach, who has, if he is an intelligent man or a disciplinarian,

an opportunity to exert a great influence upon the members of the team. The coach has prestige, he has favors to give, and he is in intimate rapport with his players. Ordinarily he uses his opportunities well. As the system usually works out, the members of the major teams form a nucleus of natural leaders among the student body, and their influence is more or less conservative and more or less on the side of what the faculty would call decent school citizenship.

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There are other activities. Their effects upon the school group, and upon the personalities of the individuals who participate in them, differ widely.

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The most important consideration affecting our judgment of any particular activity is its effect upon the personality of the participant, and this effect is usually beneficial in proportion as the activity gives to the individual opportunities for wholesome self-expression and growth through interested self-activity. A further value of activities is that they may often give a sense of solidarity to a wide group, which is an essential part of the training of the young; it is a part which is doubtless overdone at present, but it would be very regrettable if it were to be omitted altogether. From the faculty point of view, activities have a very great value in facilitating faculty control of school life. The growth of school activities in recent years, and not the development of new theories of education, would seem to have been chiefly instrumental in making school interesting for the student, and undoubtedly helps to account for the recent success of the public schools in holding their students through the years of high school. There is added the fact that most of the activities carried on in the schools would probably exist in one form or another whether the faculty fostered them or not. If the faculty is able to foster and control them, there is at least a greater likelihood that they will subserve ends acceptable to the faculty than there would be if activities were quite spontaneous.

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to show how the processes of education permeate the fabric of the entire community, to indicate that the quality of community life is to be judged by the kinds of persons developed through participation in it, and to point out that the school considered in its totality is like a community and must be judged by the same criteria. In the course of developing these main points, a number of causal factors were brought into the picture. It was noted that changes have occurred in community life, and that these changes have been accompanied by severe stresses and strains in the social fabric. As a result, the school has become an object of controversy. Both conservative and progressive elements of the community recognize that, as the school educates the immature members of the community, it necessarily teaches them to accept some things and to reject others. Each element is therefore concerned that the school's program be conducted in the interest of the community—conceived in terms of its own point of view. How to participate in the resulting struggle to control the schools and thereby use the conflict for public enlightenment about its common interest in education is one of the most pressing problems facing the profession of teaching.

Specifically, the substance of this chapter can be summarized in the following main points:

1. The school is a social system and, like all such systems, is organized according to one or more principles. In the case of the school, one of the chief principles is that of authority; that is, students are subordinate to the teachers by virtue of the fact that teachers possess the knowledge and skill which students need. This principle runs all through the make-up of the school, shaping the relations of student to student and teacher to teacher.

2. The school is a social system not only in the sense that it is an organization of individuals but also because it has its own folkways, mores, traditions, and the like. These constitute the culture of the school, and they determine the behavior of teachers, students, and all others connected with the school. They fix the meaning of good and bad conduct, success and failure, and goals and the means of their attainment. The school's culture, like that of other social systems, is not internally consistent. It contains contradictory mores and traditions. The rules that students build up among themselves as students are often quite contrary to those that teachers follow in forming their expectations of students. For example, the mores of the students may demand that the individual, instead of being a bookworm, study only enough to get by. But the mores of the teachers may demand that teachers expect the best effort from their students, and that students exert themselves to the utmost in the pursuit of their school work.

3. The fact that the school is a social system means that each individual in it, teacher no less than student, is affected in one way or another by the system, depending upon the statuses he assumes and the roles he plays. Sometimes what the individual learns from the system is good, as, for example, when he learns some of the social skills

from participation in an extracurricular activity. Then again, if he learns that only those who have wealth and prestige get the benefits of the social activities, he may come to doubt the good motives of others and to sneer at all conventions. The fact that many things are learned in the school outside the classroom is being taken into account in today's schools. This is why attention is now being given to the improvement of the school's social climate through changes in the organization and operation of the school at all levels.

4. The school is not only a social system in itself. It is also a part of a larger system, called the community. It bears an interdependent relation to the larger system; that is, the school mirrors significant aspects of the community, and the school in turn influences the community as it shapes the students in its charge. This means that social changes of major magnitude, such as new ways of making a living or new political and economic beliefs, will ultimately affect the purposes if not the content and methods of teaching. Uncertainties and conflicts among members of the community may reach into the school, upsetting its normal processes and routines. As was seen in the case of "Middletown," the school cannot be isolated from the motivations, security systems, and outlooks of the various sorts of people that make up the modern community.

5. The large system of which the school is a part also educates the individuals who participate in its processes. It is a very diversified system, consisting of many social strata, groups, cliques, and organizations. Yet it is characterized by a culture of its own—folkways, mores, and traditions. As the individual plays his various roles in the community, he takes on the ways of behaving common to his culture as well as those belonging to his social stratum. These learnings affect for good or ill the work of the school. Since the school and community are thus interwoven, the teacher of today works with the community as it seeks to improve itself and in this way reinforces the effectiveness of the school.

In this part of the book, the school has been treated as a part of a larger scheme of life. It has been presented as an institution designed to perform a specialized task which in simple societies is performed by the entire social group. One import of this role is that the school always operates within a social context. Thus far this context has been taken for granted. Little attention has been given to it as such. Since the school is dependent upon it, we need to understand this context if we are to understand the educational problems arising in the school and community. It is the task of the next five chapters to deal with this subject.

### THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. If it is true that the community educates, the child will probably know a great deal when he enters school for the first time. Make a list of some of the more significant learnings, both desirable and undesirable, that a child may acquire before he enters school.



2. Make a list of the things the various citizens of Middletown want their children to get from school. How many of these things do you think the school should provide? Why? What, if anything, have these citizens overlooked?

3. The Lynds found considerable distrust of the schools in Middletown. Does all the distrust stem from the same source? How do you account for this distrust?

4. It is said that the school is a social system. Try to identify the different parts of the school and show how they are related as the parts of a system. In what way, if at all, is the work of the teacher facilitated by the culture of the school? In what way is it impeded?

5. It is frequently said that the teacher should be informal in working with students in social groups, that he should be a member of the group in a genuine sense. How, if at all, does the principle of authority as it operates in school qualify this view of the teacher's relation to his students? Is this principle necessary? Why?

6. How, if at all, are the teacher's interests and points of view shaped by the school system and its culture?

7. Make a plan for studying a community in order to find out how its various agencies operate. For suggestions see *Your Community: Its Provisions for Health, Education, Safety, and Welfare*, by Joanna C. Colcord.

1. You may wish to read more about American communities, especially as they relate to the school. If you do, you should by all means read "American Communities," by Howard W. Beers, and "The Community School and Larger Geographic Areas," by Paul R. Hanna, in the National Society for the Study of Education, *Fifty-second Yearbook*, Part II, pp. 15-31 and 228-238. The first of these describes the shift from intimate community life to the impersonal community life of today, and sets forth different views of communities together with their value systems. The second article explains the expansion of the local community into a world community and the meaning of this expansion for education.

2. For a stimulating discussion of the nature of the modern community and its relation to the school, see *Education in the Humane Community*, by Joseph K. Hart.

3. For a good standard reference on the community in America, see *American Community Behavior: An Analysis of Problems Confronting American Communities Today*, by Jessie Bernard. A good sociology of the community.



## PART TWO

### *The School and the Structure of the Community*

#### Chapter 4. Education and Social Groups

Robert C. Angell • Grace L. Coyle • William O. Stanley • E. Pendleton Herring • W. I. Thomas • Florian Znaniecki • Saul Scheidlinger • Robert C. Angell • Mabel A. Elliott • Francis E. Merrill • Ernest W. Burgess • Robert C. Angell • Kingsley Davis • Saul Scheidlinger • Hilda Taba • Elizabeth Hall Brady • John Robinson  
• American Youth Commission

#### Chapter 5. Social Classes, Ethnic Groups, and Education

R. M. MacIver • Charles H. Page • W. Lloyd Warner • Robert J. Havighurst • Martin B. Loeb • Roger G. Barker • Herbert F. Wright • Jack Nall • Phil Schoggen • W. Lloyd Warner • Robert J. Havighurst • Martin B. Loeb • Allison Davis • Burleigh B. Gardner • Mary R. Gardner • Clyde Kluckhohn • Florence R. Kluckhohn • R. M. MacIver • Charles H. Page • St. Clair Drake • Horace R. Cayton  
• Buell G. Gallagher • Gunnar Myrdal

#### Chapter 6. Education and Welfare Levels

William F. Ogburn • Meyer Nimkoff • Dewey Anderson • Percy E. Davidson • C. Wright Mills • Edwin H. Sutherland • Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth • Henry E. Sigerist • Hadley Cantril • Richard Centers • Alfred Winslow Jones • William F. Ogburn • Meyer Nimkoff • W. Lloyd Warner • Marchia Meeker  
• Kenneth Eells

#### Chapter 7. The Impact of Class, Ethnic Groups, and Welfare Levels on the School

Harold C. Hand • W. Lloyd Warner and Associates • Raymond A. Mulligan • Allison Davis • Celia B. Stendler • Allison Davis • W. Lloyd Warner • August R. Hollingshead • Roger G. Barker • Herbert F. Wright • Jack Nall • Phil Schoggen • Allison Davis • Gunnar Myrdal • The Supreme Court of the United States • Gerhart Saenger

# Education and Social Groups

## FUNCTIONAL SPECIALIZATION AND SOCIAL GROUPS

The social groups thus far used as illustrations are *voluntary* associations, groups which individuals are more or less free to join or not, as they choose. Other important groups have less of this voluntary character. *Nonvoluntary groups* are usually associated with some established social institution—family, school, or government. Membership in

these groups tends to be mandatory, at least for the parts of the population directly concerned.

If a man and woman want legally to live together and rear children, they must form a family group which conforms, at least in some respects, to the family institutions of the society. For either to leave the association requires legal action. Children are not free to join the family of their choice and, up to a certain age, at least, their freedom to resign from a specific family association is limited sharply by law. Similarly, children are required to go to school and are put into groups—first- or seventh-grade classes, for example—with little freedom of choice on their part. Finally, in the modern world, all people are born into citizenship, membership in the political association related to some national government or another. Hurdles of various degrees of difficulty must be negotiated in order for a person to change his membership from one national group to another.

Social groups, voluntary and involuntary, are the effective links between individuals and the society to which they belong. For the very young child, the family group is at first the total and unitary link. As he grows older, the person does not outgrow group identifications. Rather, he grows into new and varied group memberships to fit, more or less well, the changing and differentiating purposes and functions of his life. To every individual, the larger society is represented by the groups to which he belongs.

### THE FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL GROUPS

The functions of specific groups are extremely various, but several typical functions can be identified to help us in analyzing and thinking about the groups to which we or others belong. One group—a “natural group,” such as a family, for example—may serve several functions. Other groups may be formed and designed to serve one function primarily.

One function of groups is to furnish the immediate satisfaction which results from the association of people of like minds and interests. Friendship and play groups of various sorts serve this function of providing immediate enjoyment for their members. A recreational group is an example. If a game which is immediately interesting to its participants requires several people to carry it through, a group becomes a necessary instrument to achieve the common satisfaction.

Groups are also necessary to serve the purposes of work. If a piece of work requires the specialized contributions of several people, a group is formed to organize and coordinate the joint effort. A construction gang, a production team in a factory or office, or a curriculum committee of teachers in a school system illustrates this function of group organization.

People may organize and use groups as instruments of social action designed to change features of their social environment with which they are dissatisfied. Closely related to the social-action function is the function of defense, in which a group defends

the rights and privileges of its members against encroachment by some other group or by the majority of people.

A group may be used as a medium of education and learning for its members. In our society, the family group is the medium through which young children first learn the ways of the culture. Learning in later life continues to be best accomplished through groups that bring people who know one aspect of culture into association with those who know it less well so that learning by the latter may be advanced. A classroom group in a school or a training group of adults in industry illustrates such specially designed learning groups.

A fifth function of a group is to help people reinforce their distinctive beliefs and ideals and achieve rededication to them. Such groups commonly employ rituals with deep common significance and emotional power for their members. Religious associations perhaps best illustrate this function of group experience, though secular groups often serve this purpose for their members.

### THE SPECIAL CONCERNS OF EDUCATORS WITH SOCIAL GROUPS

Every member of society is concerned from birth to death with social groups, both the in-groups, to which he belongs, and the out-groups, which compete or collaborate with his own. Educators—teachers and administrators—as members of society are no exception to this general rule. But what groups are of especial concern to educators in their professional role?

Educators are members of a profession. As such they constitute a special-interest, occupational group within our society. Like other organized interest groups, they are concerned with advancing and defending the interests and welfare of their members—their income, their job security, their right to teach without harmful interference from other social groups, and their social status within the community. In addition, its special professional concern with improved education for children and young people inevitably involves the educational profession in attempts to influence legislation and public policy in which the quality and availability of education are at stake. In brief, educators as an interest group must deal with other organized interest groups. They need, therefore, to become students of organized interest groups in our society.

The school shares with the family basic responsibility for the education of young people. Whether this divided responsibility breeds collaboration or competition depends in part on how well educators understand the family groups from which their students come.

Traditionally, schools have shared with families and churches the responsibility for educating children and young people. But more recently other educational agencies have come in to complicate the division of educational responsibility. Group-work agencies such as the YWCA, YMCA, YMHA, Boy and Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls; youth centers and councils; public recreation departments with youth programs—these suggest

a few of the auspices of "new" learning groups which educators must today take into account. Educators need to understand youth groups as part of the educational machinery of our society.

At the heart of the teacher's work is the classroom group. Teachers have been working with classrooms for many years. But only recently have classrooms been carefully studied as *learning groups*—groups designed and developed to stimulate and support common and individual learnings by the members.

In studying this chapter, we should keep in mind the following questions:

1. What effects has the decline of the local community had on the group life of the American people? Upon the responsibilities of the American school?
2. What is the role of the organized interest group in our own society? What problems has the growth of such groups created for the educational profession?
3. What changes have occurred in American family life? What has produced these changes? What are the major causes of parent-youth conflict? How do the changes in the family and in parent-child relationships bear on the work of the school?
4. What is the educational significance of the fact that the classroom is a group rather than a mere collection of individuals? What should be the relationship between these groups and the school?

The selections that follow are divided into three groups, each dealing with a different aspect of the relationship between education and the various social groups in our society. The first group, comprising Selections 11-14, is concerned with the educational problems arising out of the emergence of a multigroup society. It depicts the decline of the closely knit communal neighborhood characteristic of the early nineteenth century and the emergence of a welter of large and powerful organized interest groups, each with its own somewhat different social philosophy and program, which now compete for the allegiance of the individual. Some of the most important social and educational consequences of this development are considered in later chapters of the book, but in Selection 14, Thomas and Znaniecki suggest something of the serious educational problem created by the decline of the communal neighborhood as a force for the development of stable, integrated personalities.

The second group of selections deals with man's most important social and educational group—the family. After noting the significance of the family as the individual's first social group, these selections outline some of the major changes that have taken place in the functions and character of the family as the result of recent social changes. They then indicate the basic differences between rural and urban families; the last reading in this group undertakes to pinpoint the primary sources of parent-youth conflict in contemporary society.

The final group of three selections has as its subject matter two types of organized youth groups under adult sponsorship—the classroom, and organized youth groups such as the Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, the school and church clubs, and the Little League, as well as the older, youth-led organizations.

## SECTION A

## ORGANIZED INTEREST GROUPS

II • *The Decline of the Local Community*

Whatever its actual role in current social organization, the local community continues to play a prominent part in the imaginative life of the American people, perhaps especially among educators. Americans like to think of neighborliness as a quality of their social life—of neighbors joining hands to work and play together. But the concrete images that underlie this ideal tend to be old ones which have disappeared in modern life—the barn raisings and husking bees of the pioneer community. We like to think of the town meeting, where people from all walks of life assemble to work out problems together. But town meetings have tended to decline everywhere as agencies of local government. We think of local school districts as following ideally the lines of local community organization. But careful studies of actual districting show this ideal to be in large part a myth. As Robert C. Angell, a sociologist keenly interested in the problem of social integration, reminds us, the local community has declined as a unit of social organization in America. This is the sociological fact.

In earlier, simpler societies, the local community was equally as important as the family and religious institutions in supplying the individual with a sense of basic common values. And it was much more important than the larger society itself which, because communication was poor, could foster such values only in the most general and abstract way. But the local community had worked out a way of actual common living. It was a world whose culture was in part unique. Over a period of time this culture had come to embody the values that were implicit in the mode of life.

People accepted these common values as they grew up, just as they did the kind of food they ate or the methods of agriculture they used. Each member of the community was accorded his place in the whole through the operation of accepted principles. He felt himself a member of a moral community.

And what was true of the individual as a will-unit was true also of groups. They were likewise in harmony with, and to that degree subservient to, community standards. All fitted together to form a highly integrated whole.

[From Robert C. Angell, *The Integration of American Society*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1941, pp. 190-194. Used by permission of the publishers and the author. Original edition out of print. Lithoprint edition, Overbeck Co., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1947. Footnotes omitted.]



This type of local community has practically vanished in America. One may find it exemplified perhaps in a few isolated villages, but the great bulk of our citizens come under its influence no longer. The improvements in communication and transportation, the growth of large-scale capitalism, and increasing social differentiation have produced a type of life antithetical to this old-fashioned local community. Even farmers no longer find their recreation together in a country neighborhood but come to town to enjoy the movies or the picnics provided by enterprising business men.

The various types of groups . . . find themselves largely playing their parts upon a bigger stage. It is not so much that they have broken through the confines of the local community as that the latter has gradually melted away as an effective container. It is as if the sides and back of a theater stage were suddenly to dissolve into thin air and the actors be left playing their roles against the natural horizon. These groups are not so much brought under the influence of a larger whole as emancipated from the smaller one. They are little governed therefore by any sense of obligation except to their own self-contained moral principles.

The individual is not so morally emancipated as are these groups because he comes directly under the influence of the family and sometimes the church; whereas the groups only feel such influence indirectly through the mediation of their members. A strongly religious man is much more likely to embody his moral values in his personal conduct than in the conduct of a capitalist enterprise of which he happens to be the president. But, though there may be a difference in the degree of total moral emancipation, there is little difference in the emancipation from a sense of obligation to local community standards. These have vanished for the individual quite as much as for the group. The conventions that apply to manners and the like are hardly moral at all. It is because of this fact that we are justified in regarding the local community as morally vestigial.

The seeming exception to this general prin-

ciple, the professional man in smaller towns, is interesting to analyze. The local doctors, for instance, feel obligations to look after the sick even though they are not paid for it. This sense of duty was certainly developed originally under the influence of the close community. It was taken up and reenforced by other agencies, however in this case by the professional association itself. The sense of obligation is now almost completely supported by this secondary source, though it is perhaps true that it will not long survive the extinction of the moral community in which it first developed. Professional men will hardly go on feeling an obligation compatible with a type of life that no longer exists. Doctors may continue to feel moral duty toward their fellows, but it will not be determined by whether their fellows are *members of the same local community or not*.

Some may contend that our report of the death of the local moral community is, like that of Mark Twain's, grossly exaggerated. Four lines of evidence can be brought forward to sustain this contention, but I believe that all four can be successfully countered.

First, one can point to the local government and to the public interest in it. The answer here is not to deny the fact but merely to assert that one is dealing in this case with a different group from the old local community. This is the village or municipality as a political entity, a very different thing. A voter is by no means a whole person. He is expressing himself in relation to the necessary coercive order of the local community but is not participating in an all-round complex of life like a play group or a family. It was such a complex that the local community once was and is no longer.

Second, one can cite various neighborly manifestations in contemporary local communities. But these manifestations are either charities and the like—which again are specific groups with specialized purposes—or they are “circles” which by no means represent all population elements. Such circles may exercise some integrating effect upon their members, but they tend to be exclusive and to represent narrow, often intolerant and antisocial,

attitudes and points of view. Bridge-playing matrons are just as much examples of this phenomenon as a set of pool-room hangers-on.

A third objection might be that there exist some important expressions of community spirit which have nothing to do with the government, social agencies, or other such special forms. Community pageants, community orchestras and choruses, and community theaters might be cited. These are indeed evidences of common orientation, but they are quite atypical. Few communities possess them. The fact is that they have usually been established precisely in order to combat community disintegration. Realizing the trend of contemporary events, forward-looking citizens, bent on reversing the trend, have sponsored such community efforts. They rarely constitute anything that would be called an expression of a "natural" community.

The fourth line of evidence in support of the contention that the local community is not morally vestigial derives from the effect of daily newspapers. Many see in the "public" of our modern newspaper the existence of a moral community—not, to be sure, the face-to-face community of former days, but a group.

It is true that, because the individual's life is so largely a local matter, he feels the necessity of keeping up with the current of local events. A high percentage of all families will be found to be reading the local daily regularly. In so far as this reading keeps the residents in touch with one another and gives them insight into the lives of those on other social levels it perhaps develops fellow-feeling and promotes community integration. But any such effect must be very weak because the creation of common values is the work of a common life—intimate living together—not just knowing about one another. The smaller the community the more the press-developed unity tends to become real through common living, but in our large metropolitan centers the result must be largely good, but transitory, intentions. Even the community projects sometimes sponsored and successfully carried out by the local press do not necessarily prove the contrary. Such projects may be "put over" in a burst of public enthusiasm that leaves little lasting trace upon the members of the community. If it is a public swimming pool, for instance, they may very shortly begin disputing about its use by different elements of the population.

## 12 • The Importance of Organized Groups

Organized interest groups have, for many people, replaced the local community as a central object of social allegiance. These groups would not maintain their psychological hold if they did not satisfy important needs in people's personal lives. What are the needs which organized groups have come to fulfill for people in our society as local communities have declined, as the depersonalization of human relationships in work and civic life by industrial organization and city living has been accomplished, as old social anchorages have been lost in processes of rapid change? This is the question that the pioneer social worker Grace Coyle seeks to answer in the following selection.

[From Grace L. Coyle, *Social Process in Organized Groups*, Richard R. Smith, 1930, pp. 9, 11-14. Used by permission.]

Many circumstances have conspired to give the organized group a strategic position. The growth of large cities, the vastness of our world, the mechanical and impersonal character of many of our daily occupations, have been in part responsible for the tremendous growth in organizations which is so characteristic a feature of our communities.

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Human beings . . . cannot exist without social contacts and without the expression of common interests. The decline of the neighborhood as a significant unit has meant inevitably the growth of organizations which provide psychological neighborhoods of a specialized sort. Some groups, such as social clubs or country clubs, supply contacts on a basis of general sociability and include members of different ages and sexes. Much of such activity, however, separates the members of the family and sharpens the specialization of interests by serving only one or two in one organization. Membership in several organizations counteracts such specialization to some extent, but the results are a different type of personality. The kind of personal unity developed out of a society which embodied most of the aspects of life within one group—as in the closely knit neighborhood or the church of the Middle Ages, was a unity not consciously achieved but unconsciously fashioned by the impact of a single environment—like the action of waves on a pebble. As soon as interests become differentiated and find expression in various groups each receives stimulus in a somewhat different setting. The result is versatility—a many-faceted personality whose unity if secured, must be “wrought into consistency” by the act of choice. It is through the development of organized groups on an interest basis, supplanting the old ties of the neighborhood that a new type of social life is being created out of our large city environment.

The very size of our milieu has necessitated the growth of organizations to protect the self-esteem of the individual. As Laski has

said “the individual is lost in a big world unless there are fellowships to guard him.” In the realm of politics especially this sense of impotence in the face of vast social forces makes the legal right to citizenship often seem an empty promise which was won just in time to become worthless. Within the more compassable limits of a face-to-face organization, the individual can regain his claim to uniqueness and consideration. Where these organizations become too large, he is likely to lose it again and to require new formations of subgroups within if he is to hold on to a possession at once elusive and profoundly important.

The sense of impotence in our vast social setting may be in some sense an illusion as the defenders of individualistic democracy insist. On the behavior of us all, the final result in social action does depend. But its necessary diffusion, while it may not mean actual impotence, robs the participation of the immediate sense of significance. The subjective and to a large extent the objective answer to this difficulty lies rather in the organization of groups. Collective action represents the return to power of the individual, but in a different form and it is that recognition which has built many of our numerous and powerful associations.

Not only its vastness but its impersonality gives our milieu its peculiar tone. Much of the impact which it makes upon the individual is through impersonal forms. The gossip of the tabloids replaces the intercourse of the back fence. Bill-board advertising is substituted for the persuasions of the pedlar or the more recent arts of the corner storekeeper. The prevalence of the impersonal relation between employer and worker is one of the commonplaces of industrial development. The penetrating character of our “machine-made pre-conceptions” as Veblen calls them, is evident throughout the entire fabric of our social life. It seems quite probable that some of the growth of organizations can be accounted for as an attempt at compensation and escape from the impersonal social en-

vironment. The need for human intercourse in its personal aspect is as urgent as ever and if our surroundings do not provide it in one form, we will create it in another.

It is possible also that a form of economic organization which condemns the great majority to the pursuit of their occupations of ends not their own, requires the provision in other aspects of its life for an abundance of purposive activity. Certainly the growth of organizations presents a development much more encouraging to active mental effort and initiative than is found in the success of the passive commercialized amusements.

It is interesting to consider also whether the continued growth of the ritualistic organizations has its root in the lack of color and significance in the life of the individual in our industrial communities. With their honorific titles, their hierarchies and elaborate rituals, it is possible that they provide a compensation for the sense of insignificance which threatens to engulf their members in the daily round of employment. That this need is very widespread is witnessed by their prevalence in other times and places, but it seems likely that they serve an especial want in our mechanized society.

### 13 • The Social Significance of Organized Interests

The following selection dealing with the power and role of organized interest groups in American life, has been compiled from two sources. The first part, from William O. Stanley's *Education and Social Integration*, is concerned primarily with the relation of these groups to the public welfare. To many Americans of the middle class, teachers among them, organized interest groups seem to have an aura of immorality. They connote social and political pressure, social struggle, and the elevation of self-interest over public interest. Stanley challenges this popular conception of organized groups and seeks to clarify the moral-political issue which the fragmentation of "public" interest has produced in our society.

The second part, by E. Pendleton Herring—a political scientist who has studied intensively pressure groups in American politics—calls attention to the powerful role which these groups now play in the determination of public policy.

Traditionally, representatives in American government, local, state, or national, have been chosen on the basis of geographic area. This basis of representation reflected the social fact that citizens living in the same locality held more or less common opinions on issues of the day. However, when local and sectional interests and opinions tend to be divided rather than common, a representative from a geographic area finds it difficult to represent all the people in his area. Distinct interests tend now to be channeled and articulated by organized groups—labor unions, trade associations, professional societies, and the like. Lobbies have grown up in connection with many legislative bodies, and lobbyists for the most part represent organized interest groups. Herring considers the meaning of these groups for modern representative and democratic government.

### Organized Interests and Social Power

The individual voice . . . has all but lost its effectiveness in the complex and impersonal relationships which now govern the most intimate concerns of ordinary men and women. In the small, face-to-face communities of the nineteenth century every person, no matter how humble, counted for his full worth as an individual both in the formulation of public opinion and, on the local stage at least, in the determination of public policy. Throughout the early days of the Republic American democracy rested squarely upon the solid rock of individual participation in the affairs of the community; and it was precisely for this reason that local and state governments were almost universally regarded as the bulwarks of the power of the people. But in the great society created by science and technology the individual citizen, as Professor Harold Laski has remarked, secures effective power only as a member of an organized group. Individuals, to be sure, are still heard but, except for a few outstanding and unique personalities, they are heard for the most part not as individuals but as the leaders and spokesmen of powerful interests. Hence, men have either withdrawn from the arena of public affairs or they have turned to group action and to group expression of opinion. Consequently, organized associations representing specialized and particular interests in society are in large measure the media through which individuals participate in public affairs. The organized interest group, therefore, has replaced the local community as the effective agency of public opinion and politics just as special interests and occupations have replaced the neighborhood as the major force in the shaping of the conduct and beliefs of persons.

The ubiquity of organized groups in contemporary society is a matter of common knowledge; the typical American is a member of not one but several such associations.

Naturally, a large proportion of these organizations, while they undoubtedly serve some more or less vital need in the lives of their members, are not of any great significance either in shaping the character of persons or in determining the contours of public policy. Others, however, as has been suggested above, have their roots deep in the social structure itself, [growing] . . . directly out of the relations men bear to the fundamental institutions of our time. The most conspicuous, and perhaps the most significant examples of this category of associations are to be found in the occupational and professional organizations (such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmer's Union, the American Federation of Labor, the Bar Association, and the National Education Association) based upon the functional relationships of different groups to the economic processes of society; but even a casual inspection will indicate that every major social institution is surrounded by a cluster of organized associations representing the particular interests of different groups. Unlike the earlier community, no one of these associations ever expresses the full personality of any of its members. But they do represent fundamental human concerns and they are now the only effective means by which individuals can either make their wants known or influence significantly the course of events. Consequently, a large share of the loyalty and allegiance which men formerly gave to their local community has been transferred to special interest groups. Organized associations, therefore, occupy a much more significant place in twentieth-century America than they did in the America of de Tocqueville and Lord Bryce. It is not simply that they are now much more numerous and powerful than they were formerly; although that, of course, is true. It is rather that a century ago they did not penetrate below the surface of

American life, whereas they have now become part and parcel of the very core of American society.

Yet it is doubtful that we have even now begun to grasp the full significance of organized associations. Their power has been widely recognized but their legitimacy has been sharply questioned, primarily on the ground that they are essentially pressure groups engaged in the dubious task of advancing narrow and selfish interests in opposition to the public welfare. There is, indeed, some ground for this position. These groups have been organized precisely in order to fight for particular interests, and each of them has a program designed to serve that interest. From the standpoint of the external observer, their activities can frequently be described in terms of selfish pressure for partial and private ends. Nevertheless, the role of organized interest groups in American society cannot be fully comprehended in such terms. Each of these groups represents a portion of the public, the more important of them a large and significant portion; consequently, their interests are in some measure a part of the public interest. Moreover, these groups typically conceive their purposes, not in terms of purely private advantage, but in terms of *their* conception of the common weal; they usually regard their respective programs, not as obstacles to the common good, but as an essential condition of its realization. Each of these groups has developed, consciously or unconsciously, some social philosophy; each of them must be understood as making, in some particulars at least, proposals to the American public with respect to the goals of American life and the means by which they are to be achieved. Nor can these proposals be dismissed with impunity as sheer rationalizations. The members of pressure groups are also members of society; as such, they, no more than other men, can free themselves in their own minds from the common obligation to respect the public weal. Moreover, in order to advance the interests which they represent, pressure groups must frequently secure the cooperation of other groups.

Hence, they are compelled both by moral principles of their members and the practical necessities of the situation to relate their particular interest to the general welfare.

The tendency of men, where vital interests are at stake, to erect their particular concern into a universal may be readily admitted. But that is a principle which is limited to no single group, and it is pertinent to ask where, in a modern industrial society, the impartial public is to be located. The fact is that the existence of powerful organized interests in American society is the reflection of the division of that society into significant functional groups, . . . as the existence of group perspectives and points of view is a reflection of the absence, in part at least, of universally accepted standards of public welfare. In the last analysis, the conflict of social philosophies and programs represented by the welter of contending interest groups is a competition of contrasting theories of the public good, undoubtedly conditioned by the particular interests cherished by each of these groups, but not, in any sense, simply a cynical and selfish dogfight conceived solely in terms of purely private advantage.

The public interest, in the modern world, is an achievement rather than an original datum; . . . acceptable standards of public welfare must include in some measure, as they must also transcend, the particular interests of the functional groups necessarily involved in the social structure. It may also be added that it is probable that where such standards are achieved, the competing conceptions of public welfare cherished by these organized groups inevitably furnish an important element of the material out of which they are fashioned. While these groups, therefore, are pressure groups, that label does not fully define their meaning; indeed, their primary significance cannot be comprehended at all in such terms. Rather, they must be understood as representatives of important group interests in American society, and as the bearers of pregnant propositions concerning the meaning of the public welfare and the definition of the ends of public policy.

## Organized Interests in the Political Process

Today when the voter becomes fired with an overpowering conviction as to the truth or falsity of a particular matter of political, social, or economic importance, he does not immediately look to the party as the vehicle to give support and expression to his doctrine. He finds about him numerous organized groups built around certain definite interests. It is to them that he turns for support and co-operation, and it is a rare point of view, indeed, that does not find among them some society or national association that is not already sponsoring whatever the most fertile mind of man can conceive. There have always been organized groups, fraternal, religious, social, and economic. There have appeared from time to time in the history of the country various minority political parties, such as the Populists, the Greenbackers, and the Know-Nothings, which have arisen in advocacy of some specific principles or some narrow program.

The organized groups to which the voter turns today partake of the characteristics of both the typical "society" and the minority party. They resemble the former in that they have a listed membership, duly elected officers, dues to pay, meetings to attend, and a continuous existence. They resemble the latter in that they have a direct interest in certain phases of politics, a policy toward the government, and often a definite program to be obtained at the hands of the legislators. In their support of a particular policy and point of view they act in the capacity of a representative agency toward the government. Their whole *raison d'être* is predicated upon a principle, either altruistic or selfish, and success means nothing unless it is the success of this interest. Examples of such organizations are known to everyone: The Anti-Saloon League, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the W.C.T.U., the National

Grange, and the League of Nations Non-Partisan Association are among the more familiar.

Within very recent years these groups have increased and multiplied. More important still, they have become highly organized and are today conducted by shrewd and capable leaders. Now because of improved means of communication, these groups, no longer hindered by geographic limitations, are organizing on a national and even world-wide scale. They are assuming a place of first importance in the expression of public sentiment. They represent compact and determined groups who know what they want and how they want it. In their methods, in their numbers, and in their influence they are becoming a problem in representative government. They constitute a development which should be considered in the light of the accepted theory of representation. These organized groups approach the individual from an angle that is at variance with the viewpoint accepted by current theory. The attitude of the party toward the voter is in harmony with orthodox ideas of representation: the political party treats him as a citizen with a national point of view.

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Democratic dogma postulates that the citizenry put thought of the national welfare before that of the individual. The general presence of this attitude constitutes a well disposed public sentiment. The citizens are supposed to take a broad view of national affairs. This makes up the "public opinion" that is to rule the country. Apparently the tendency of associations and leagues of citizens formed for the accomplishment of their own particular purposes ignores the theory that the general good should be the consideration of the citizen before that of any one group. This theory of the general welfare, however, fails

[From E. Pendleton Herring, *Group Representation Before Congress*, Johns Hopkins Press, 1929, pp. 2-8, 10-12, 267-268. Used by permission of the publishers.]

to take into account the circumstances and conditions under which people actually live. Geographic divisions represent voters adequately if they are considered simply as population capable of being arbitrarily divided into arithmetical areas. It fails to consider that men live their lives not as citizens of a state or voters in a congressional district, but as members of various business, social, fraternal, and economic units. It is in these units that their chief interests lie, not in wards and precincts. The relationship to government is at best vague and rarely examined. There is the post office, the traffic court, the tax bill, talk of elections, and voting at intervals, but the vital interests of the people are not with these concerns. They are asked at certain seasons of the year to cease being doctors or grocers or pacifists and become simply citizens and voters. Many find this difficult to do, others neglect entirely to make the attempt. The low percentage of the voters going to the polls illustrates this clearly. The allegiance of a man or woman is not first to his locality or his politics, but rather to his class and his occupation together with the interests growing therefrom.

His interests are narrowed of necessity. In this complex world, in which only the expert can move confidently, and that only within the confines of his own particular field, the simple man, the voter, is confronted and confounded by a multitude of problems the difficulty of some of which he does not suspect, the solution of most of which he has no idea, the method of treating which he has no guide, and the means for acquiring knowledge of which he has neither the time nor ability to ascertain. Today, the ideal citizen, attempting to keep properly informed and ready to pass intelligently on all public matters of moment, would die of brain storm and nervous indigestion superinduced by too rich a diet of current events.

In the welter of this modern age, so highly industrialized and with business relations and social contacts so minutely subdivided and specialized, the individual, as such, is of slight importance. He is no longer the smallest unit of the greatest significance. He has become a

mere cipher in a larger and emergent unit: the organized group. The group may be defined as a number of individuals bound together in a common cause or united by similar interests into an articulate unit. The individual, *per se*, finds himself lost and defenseless. Only a handful can survive and force recognition by the strength of their own personalities. Alone, man is overwhelmed by his environment.

He does not find himself alone, however. He lives his daily life as a member of a social group of one sort or another. He may be a butcher, a baker, or a candlestick maker; a doctor, lawyer, or merchant. As such he is a member of a group with fairly well-defined aims. It is here that his principal interests center. Herein he gains his livelihood. It is from this point that his other contacts are usually made, determined in large measure by his economic status. He identifies himself with other groups as his social, religious, political, and artistic opinions and feelings may lead him. Regularly organized societies, leagues, and associations stand ready to urge his opinions.

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To indicate the extent to which this organization into groups has gone is to verge upon the fantastic. Every newspaper reader is familiar with the fact that even the hoboes of the country have a "national association" in name at least. Accounts are given of annual meetings and the president has frequently been interviewed by the press. Absurd as this instance may seem, a slight basis of economic self-interest may possibly serve to explain its existence. But what is one to believe of the National Circus Fans Association? Three annual conventions have already been held; two hundred local societies, called "white tops," are scattered over the country; and a substantial membership is enrolled. Its organizers explain that their boyhood memory of circus joys is yet so strong that they are determined in their manhood to protect the traveling shows from unfriendly legislation and unsympathetic public officers. If such flimsy sentimentality is sufficient to bind men together,



what more need be said of the strength of the social, the fraternal, the patriotic, and the economic bonds that unite individuals into groups?

Every person is played upon by an immense number of influences. He is the target of propagandists, economic, political, religious, and various, but the stimuli to which he responds are determined by the groups with which he has become allied. To the others he turns a deaf ear. The much described indifference of the voter is largely explained by the infinite variety of interests impinging on the citizen and the limitations of human nature to consider more than one thing at a time. His interests have become narrowed; they have not vanished. Indifference is the defensive shield against distraction. Yet the individual is inevitably affected by some proselyting groups, even if unconsciously. Toward others he places himself on the offensive and allies himself with an opposing group. These in turn open a barrage of propaganda.

Man has, to be sure, always sought to advance his cause by alliance with like-minded fellows, but the group today has assumed a dominant place. The emphasis has shifted from the individual. The voice harkened to by legislators is not the lone voice of a citizen crying in a wilderness of individual opinions, but the chorus of a cause organized for a purpose and directed by a press agent. This complex society has put the individual in the chorus and instructed him to watch the leader. The shift has been from individuals with ideas over to choruses with themes to harp upon.

A hundred years ago democratic theories were individualistic. They treated the state as a sum of equal and independent units. Now we have learned that man is a social being, not only in Aristotle's sense that he is constrained by his nature to be a member of a state, but also in the broader sense that he is bound by subtle ties to other and smaller groups of persons within the state. We have learned to recognize this; and

what is more, with the case of organization fostered by modern conditions, the number, the complexity, and the aggregate strength of such ties has increased. No one can have observed social life carefully, under any aspect, without seeing that cooperative interests have in some measure replaced personal ones; that in its conscious spirit western civilization has become less individualistic, more highly organized, or, if you will, more socialistic. This is among the dominant notes of our time.<sup>1</sup>

These groups have brought to the fore a significant development in representative government. We find in this democracy, the governmental system of which is premised on the selection of representatives from geographic units, a system of vocational and special interest representation arising. These groups have evolved as the natural sequence of the social, economic, and political forces of the time. They have received no official recognition and have been given no legal place in the governmental structure as have similar groups in Europe. In the United States they stand beyond the pale of the Constitution. On the face of things they seem to contradict and perhaps disrupt the older system of geographic representation, for they stand as the spokesmen of groups much more unified and cohesive than the heterogeneous constituency of an arbitrary geographic division of territory. The common bond of mere propinquity means less in this day of rapid intercommunication. Men are no longer bound to the restricted interests of a community; literally and figuratively they can "tune in" on the interests of the whole nation. Women have certain common interests, so have locomotive engineers, macaroni manufacturers, or churchmen; today these groups meet in convention, discuss policies, and select spokesmen. As groups with special interests they are avowedly determined that their influence shall be felt and their welfare considered.

Under the theory of representative govern-

<sup>1</sup> A. Lawrence Lowell, *Public Opinion and Popular Government*, pp. 39-40.

ment the legislators are presumed to hold to a broad national point of view and think in terms of the public good. These organized groups oftentimes succeed in affecting this detached point of view by skillful pleading; sometimes they succeed in sending their representatives to the legislative bodies. Moreover, the problems of various groups in some cases have become so technical and complex that the legislator needs expert guidance to handle these interests intelligently. Here again, orthodox theory comes into conflict with the actual situation. The established system not only fails to represent the citizen in the social circumstances in which he actually lives, but likewise precludes delegates of groups from participating in the direct solution of the difficult problems of their class, with which they, as members of this class are most competent to deal. When such delegates do succeed in obtaining seats in a legislative assembly they appear to contravene the theory of representative government when they act as spokesmen for their group. Legislators theoretically are spokesmen for the people as a whole. Established institutions make difficult any such official participation of groups, and accepted theories of government discourage special-interest representation.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that a multitude of groups have assumed a definite role in popular government. They are actively at work day in and day out as spokesmen for the citizens they represent. The interests of the group are too immediate, too direct, too urgent to be neglected by that group. The interested parties speak for themselves. As a matter of fact, millions of citizens are organized and hundreds of their associations are actively engaged in forwarding their policies before the national government.

With proper safeguards against abuse and deception, these associations promise well as a means of meeting the problems of representation that have arisen with the growing complexity of society. Communities are no longer homogeneous because of geographical

proximity. The advances in transportation and communication have brought about a new tie. Distance means little today. Yet the formal system of representative government under which we are operating was established at a time when men were forced by the mere fact of living together to have many interests in common. They were forced to be dependent on their immediate neighbors, and naturally their common interests were many. Now, however, industrialists, farmers, laborers, churchmen, or reformers all over the country can unite and discuss their common problems. From this association there is but one step to the desire on the part of the group to make its voice heard in the councils of government. The government has set up certain administrative and judicial tribunals to deal with these new interrelations of men that have resulted from easier communication, but the fact that men have interests in common other than those bred by living in the same vicinity has been ignored in the structure of the representative branch of the government. In the formal system of representation, we are still using the mode of the eighteenth century. With the decline of the political party as the leader in policy and opinion, it was not only compulsory but inevitable that some other medium of expression for the many diverse points of view and commercial and ideational interest should evolve. The national associations are the result.

They represent a healthy democratic development. They rose in answer to certain needs. They have been forced to take the political structure as they found it. Entirely extra-legal and non-constitutional, they have been much maligned and misunderstood. They are a part of our representative system, and yet due to their heritage from the old lobby they bear the taint of illegitimacy. There is no turning back. These groups must be welcomed for what they are, and certain precautionary regulations worked out. The groups must be understood and their place in government allotted, if not by actual legislation, then by general public realization of their significance.

## 14 • Building Stable Character in a Multigroup Society

Thus far we have considered the relations of organized interest groups to the decline of the local community, the psychological needs that such groups satisfy, the relations of interest groups to public morality, and their meaning for representative democracy. We have yet to face the central *educational* question concerning life in our multigroup society: What effects has the shift from local allegiance to a variety of group allegiances had upon the character of people living in our society? It is this question that W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki attempt to answer. The selection is taken from *The Polish Peasant*, one of the landmarks of sociological literature. In this book the authors are vitally concerned with the impact that the decline of the communal neighborhood has upon character and personality.

A complex modern society is no longer in all its parts in immediate touch with its members. It is composed, indeed, of small groups whose members are in personal interrelations; but none of these groups can enclose all the interests of the individual, because each one has only a limited and specialized field. Therefore individual character can be no longer unified upon the basis of the general desires for response and recognition, for even if these desires always remain fundamental for social relations, they must be differently qualified in different groups. The kind of response and recognition the individual gets in his family, in his church, in his professional group, in his political party, among his companions in pleasure, varies within very wide limits. It is based now upon the special activities which constitute the object of interest of every special group. Therefore the ground of the unity of character must now be sought in attitudes corresponding to these activities; the character of the social personality can no longer be unified by a reduction of all special attitudes to a general social basis but by an organization of these attitudes themselves.

But the difficulty is that each limited and

specialized social group tends to impose upon every member a specific character corresponding to its particular line of common interests, wants him to be mainly, if not exclusively, a family member, a religious person, a professional, a political party member, a sportsman, a drunkard, etc., and expects his other attitudes to be subordinated to one particular kind of attitude. The individual cannot satisfy completely the claims of any of these groups, and he may either yield to the old social claim that he should possess an early, fixed, stable and simple character upon which society can count, and satisfy completely the claims of a specialized group, or he may reject all claims together. In the first case he can attain a unity of character only at the cost of a narrowness of interests such as no member of a primary group, peasant or savage, ever knows. Examples of this are found among the professional types. Certain occupations, such as military service, school-teaching, the ministry, administrative service in a strongly developed bureaucracy, small shopkeeping, farming, housekeeping, tend to influence character in a measure sufficiently strong to produce types which in their fundamental

[From W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Richard G. Badger, 1919, Vol. III, pp. 59-64. Used by permission of the Social Science Research Council and Florian Znaniecki.]

features are similar in all societies. Occupational groups tend more and more to exclude from the sphere of their interests anything that is not directly connected with their "business," and an individual whose character is formed by a modern professional group is the narrowest type of Philistine the world has ever seen, particularly if the profession itself does not afford much opportunity for development.

But even so, the narrowness of the occupational type has probably not yet attained the extreme limit it is able to reach—and would reach if evolution went on undisturbed in the same direction as in the last two centuries—because social tradition still preserves some of the remnants of the old primary group conditions, in which the individual is supposed to share all the interests of his social group, and the latter includes a large variety of interests. An occupational group of the type of a mediaeval guild, though not satisfying all individual interests as completely as a peasant community, appealed nevertheless to many interests besides the professional ones; it controlled individual character rather tyrannically, imposed a very definite complex of attitudes, but the complex was much less narrow than, for instance, the one which in recent times was imposed upon a Prussian army officer. . . . But this type of occupational group, which seemed to be intermediary between the old primary group and the modern forms of social organization, is clearly decaying everywhere, in spite of the occasional effort to revive it.

But precisely because of the growing specialization of occupational groups, cases of character formed exclusively by adaptation to one occupational group are becoming less and less frequent. The modern individual usually belongs to different groups, each of which undertakes to organize a certain kind of his attitudes. But it remains true that the way in which these various complexes of attitudes are combined usually shows a complete lack of organization. An individual of this type is a completely different man in his shop, in his family, with his boon companions, preserving his balance by distributing his interests between different social groups, until it is im-

possible to understand how such a multiplicity of disconnected, often radically conflicting characters, can co-exist in what seems to be one personality. This is a new style Philistinism—the Philistinism of the dissociated personality, amounting to a sort of stabilized Bohemianism. And a striking feature of modern society, showing how little reflective attention is paid to the problem of developing organized and rich human personalities, is the fact that society does not notice this chaotic and mechanical stabilization of the character of its member, provided he shows himself properly adapted to the minimum demands of each of the special groups to which he belongs, and does not give an undue prevalence to one of his particular characters at the expense of others. The weakness of this Philistinism, in spite of the seeming broadness of interest which the Philistine exhibits, shows itself at periods of social crisis when old special groups break down. Each such breakdown brings a complete disorganization of the corresponding attitudes. . . . We may even make a more general supposition: The "moral unrest" so deeply penetrating all western societies, the growing vagueness and indecision of personalities, the almost complete disappearance of the "strong and steady character" of old times, in short, the rapid and general increase of Bohemianism and Bolshevism in all societies, is an effect of the fact that not only the early primary group controlling all interests of its members on the general social basis, not only the occupational group of the mediaeval type controlling most of the interests of its members on a professional basis, but even the special modern group dividing with many others the task of organizing permanently the attitudes of each of its members, is more and more losing ground. The pace of social evolution has become so rapid that special groups are ceasing to be permanent and stable enough to organize and maintain organized complexes of attitudes of their members which correspond to their common pursuits. In other words, society is gradually losing all its old machinery for the determination and stabilization of individual characters.

## SECTION B

## THE FAMILY

15 • *The Individual's First Group*

Two facts about the American family seem clear. We depend fundamentally on the family for rearing and educating children during their early years. And yet the family group has been changing more or less markedly during the last generation or two—in its functions and in its form. Many of our contemporary concerns with family life arise out of these two facts taken together. In what direction or directions is family life changing? And what effects, both individual and social, do these changes have upon the education of children during their early and most formative years? This latter question is of particular concern to educators, for the educational program of the schools must somehow be meshed with the educational “program” of the family, however vague and various the latter “program” may be.

It is a commonplace that many of the individual's basic and persistent learnings take place in his early years in the family group. What is perhaps not so generally emphasized is that family experience is a *group* experience. Among the most important learnings the young child experiences within the family are his attitudes toward other members, toward authority as represented by parents in the family group, toward sharing and cooperation—in brief, toward groups and group membership generally. In the following selection, Saul Scheidlinger emphasizes the group character of family life and its importance in the subsequent personal development of the child as a member of other groups.

We have seen . . . how, given favorable circumstances, the child's personality evolves from a state of complete egocentrism, to an increasing capacity and desire to relate to the mother, to the parents as a couple, to siblings and to other people. It was also noted, how mature object relationships involve a capacity to give as well as to take emotionally; how

the child has to learn to postpone, to renounce and to redirect many of his impulses (love and aggressive) if he is to become a socialized being. This learning to share and to cooperate flows from the reality of having to live together with a group of people, the members of the family. In general, family life necessarily involves some loss of privacy and indi-

[From Saul Scheidlinger, *Psychoanalysis and Group Behavior*, copyright 1952 by W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., pp. 43-44. Reprinted by permission of W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.]

vidual identity, the giving up of personal desires, particularly if these interfere with the needs of others. The ability to adjust to the demands of family living depends on the individual's capacity to tolerate frustration as well as on the availability of substitute satisfactions. Being a member of the family group, although calling for certain sacrifices, also offers definite pleasures and advantages which are inherent in group living.

The family constitutes not only the first step in the individual's association with other people, but it also becomes a kind of prototype for subsequent group relations. The young child takes with him to his play group the significant conscious and unconscious emotional attitudes toward himself, the parental figures and other children which he has evolved in the course of family living.

Optimum satisfaction through his earliest group experiences enables the individual to extend his contacts with ease to ever broadening group situations: the school group, the club, the gang, and the associations characteristic of adult community living. Flugel found that healthy identification with large and more complex groups involved "a relatively high level of psychological achievement, a stage which can only be reached through in-

termediate stages in which interest is directed to smaller and more easily apprehended groups, among which smaller groups the family appears to be the most primitive, most natural and most fundamental."<sup>1</sup> Foulkes stated that "indeed the family group and its influence is precipitated in the innermost core of the human mind, incorporated into the child's growing ego and super-ego forming their very nucleus."<sup>2</sup> Murphy ascribes similar importance to the early family experiences. "... Canalized and conditioned responses transfer to persons similar to those with whom the first associations were formed. If this is true, we should expect to find that the deeper and more constantly reinforced responses to parents and to brothers and sisters will become the matrix from which the field of friendships and hostilities, dependent and autonomous social relationships will grow."<sup>3</sup> These canalizations upon the family Murphy viewed as markedly stable and relatively dissoluble aspects of character structure.

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Flugel, *Men and Their Motives*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> S. H. Foulkes, *Introduction to Group-Analytic Psychotherapy*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> G. Murphy, *Personality: A Biosocial Approach to Origin and Structure*, p. 843.

## 16 • The Family in Contemporary Society

The family has always been recognized as one of the primary social groups (if not, indeed, *the* primary group) in society—not only in the sense that it is, as Scheidlinger has pointed out, the individual's first group but also in the sense of its significance for both society and the individual. To an even greater extent, there has been a general recognition by the teaching profession of the very great importance of the family to the teacher and to the work of the school, as the almost universal existence of parent-teacher associations indicates.

Most Americans are aware that, in the last few decades, there have been a number of changes in American life. Relations between parents and children are not the same as they have been, even in the recent past. Attitudes toward divorce have changed, and the rate of divorce has sharply reflected this change. In fact, some clergymen, judges, and

social scientists have asserted that there has been a progressive disintegration of American family life.

The following selection is intended to help the prospective teacher in obtaining a clearer understanding of the role of the family in contemporary society and of the nature and significance of the changes which have taken place in the life and structure of the American family.

This selection consists of three items. In the first, Robert C. Angell undertakes to answer certain vital questions about the role of the family in America today. What part does the modern family play in the integration or disintegration of our multigroup society? Are the values that it teaches children beneficial to the whole society or do they tend to produce primary allegiance to some one segment of society? What are the educational effects of the family, judged from the standpoint of a complex and divided society striving to find and maintain integrity and common direction?

In the second item of the selection, Mabel A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill, authors of a textbook in social disorganization, have sought objectivity in their examination of the changing family by relating it to the larger pattern of social change in modern society.

In the final item, Ernest W. Burgess, one of America's leading sociologists, accepts Elliott's and Merrill's thesis that family change is a species of social change in general. Looking for a pattern within the changes of family life, he finds a general direction in it, whatever the complexity and variety which are also present. The change, he says, and the experimentation and groping by parents and children that accompany it, is in the direction of greater realization of democratic values in family life.

### The Family and Social Integration

The contemporary family, despite all its structural weakening, is not a mere voluntary group or association. The persons who form it do not rationally come together for particular purposes and as rationally forsake it when those purposes are fulfilled. There is a normative character about the family which voluntary associations lack. There is an "oughtness" about one's membership and participation.

This is perhaps another way of saying that the family has an institutional character. It expresses common human sentiments and values. It is so deeply rooted in the fundamental conditions of human life that all naturally look upon it as right. Indeed our notions of right develop in and through the family to such an extent that we probably accept the family first and rationalize its rightness afterward. To put it differently, the family is not so much conducive to our ultimate values as

[From Robert C. Angell, *The Integration of American Society*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1941, pp. 145-149. Used by permission of the author and the publishers. Original edition out of print. Lithoprint edition, Overbeck Co., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1947. Footnotes omitted.]

it is an ultimate value itself. We think of social utopias in terms of broader relations similar to those of the family. Husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister are types of relationship which we idealize. We cannot conceive a satisfactory life without them.

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That the family does still occupy a central place in our social life and culture is shown strikingly in two ways. First, the individual tends to think of his own life course in terms of family relations. He begins as the helpless infant in his mother's arms, progresses through childhood protected and guided by his family, typically breaks away from it only to marry and found a family of his own, and then passes the remainder of his life raising and caring for his own children. This is not just an outsider's view of a person's life, but it is the course he himself regards as natural and proper. In the second place, the most searching judgment of a person is passed in relation to his performance of his family role. Almost everything else is forgiven him if he is a good father and husband or a good son, and nothing can atone for failure in these respects. It is true that we do not always know how a person fills his role in the family, but if we would judge his character we make every attempt to find out. For us the family still remains the essential social relationship. If common values are anywhere brought to expression in modern life it is here.

It is difficult to say with any assurance what the role of the contemporary family is with reference to the fostering of common societal values. In a simpler day that role was great. A devotion to common values was achieved within the family and then projected outward upon the life of the wider society. This was accomplished not so much by an explicit teaching as by day-to-day experience. In most families children learned to live in a real community, to understand the value of moral unity. They enjoyed such qualities of a common life in the family as self-expression for all, a sense of security, general obedience to rules, mutual appreciation, kindness, and

a strong sense of loyalty. And they tended to assume that those outside the immediate circle deserved to enjoy these too. Cooley has pointed out that those systems of larger idealism like Christianity and democracy which are most human and therefore of most enduring value have always been based upon experience in primary groups like the family. It is true that the family has ever been a relatively simple form of organization and that therefore projection of its ideals has only yielded rough guidance in the larger sphere of society. But the common orientation has been deeply rooted in concrete experience and, like that springing from the old neighborhood, has made up in power what it lacked in detailed applicability.

In our life, however, there are real barriers to the successful projection of family common values. Chief among these is the fact that in many respects the larger life does not furnish much basis for a real "we"-group. It is so highly differentiated and class divisions run so deep that the extension to it of primary ideals, an extension natural in a homogeneous or simple heterogeneous society, is hampered. Some would argue that these classes themselves, stemming in the main from effects of large-scale capitalism, are more natural focuses for "we"-feeling; and that the primary ideals of the family tend to be projected only to embrace the class to which the family belongs. Although this seems to be an extreme view because of the power of the sense of nationality, it points to a real weakness in our societal situation.

Even admitting this limitation on the family's integrative power, we are perhaps justified in assigning the family a large share of the credit for whatever societal integration we possess. Its influence in the direction of common orientation is more deep-rooted than that of the state, more universal than that of the church, and more intimate than that of the school. If classes should become more aware of their common obligations to the whole society so that the barriers to the extension of primary ideals were lessened, the integrative power of the family would again become of predominant importance. People



would more and more regard those in other social classes as participating in a common life, and that viewpoint would give a basis for a society-wide projection of values.

Thus we arrive at what may seem to be a paradoxical conclusion with regard to the family. Its ability to foster common orientation in the members of our society has been considerably weakened, but as a structure it is still regarded as an expression of our common values. This is not paradoxical, however, if we remember the individualism of West-

ern culture. We Americans look upon the family as a necessary means to the rearing of children, as a form within which individuality can be developed. It never occurs to us to ask whether it is developing in our children devotion to the wider society. And even if we did think of this aspect of the matter, we might still say that such devotion is a problem for the school or the state, not for the family. The family is an aspect of the good life but is not necessarily productive of much societal integration.

### The Impact of Social Change on the Family

The family has been defined as a functioning unit composed of husband, wife, and children and united by bonds of blood and common interest. As such, it must inevitably bear some imprint from its contacts with the larger social order. The enormous increase in the number of such contacts has been in itself a potent influence in altering the family's function and role, whether we are considering it from the point of view of individual or of social import. Think for a moment of the rapid accumulation in material culture, the scope and variety of inventions, the remarkable facilities for communication and transportation, which have so largely disorganized and disintegrated those patterns of family life that were universally accepted within the memory of living men. In addition to these influences, the concomitant widespread urbanization of our civilization has left us fairly overwhelmed when we attempt to analyze the resultant changes in our manner of living.

Out of this vast interplay of impersonally operating forces a new type of family life is emerging. "New families for old" is no idle whim of radical leaders, even though certain reactionaries may not be constrained to accept the new situation. The confused and complex interrelationship of social, economic, political, and philosophical factors has given

birth to new attitudes, values, and standards which have affected all of our basic social institutions. There is scant reason to suppose that the type of family organization which afforded a highly satisfactory basis for cooperative personal relationships between men and women and suitable means of caring for their children during the Middle Ages should prove entirely acceptable now. The economic structure has changed from a home and village economy to the factory system. Belief in the absolute authority of the fathers of the church is untenable for a vast group of thinking adults. A new understanding of the motivations of human conduct has altered current views as to the function and role of marriage in its relation to human personality. The acceptance of a philosophy of life which finds joy in living for its own sake must yield some definite alteration in the structure and function of the family.

The traditional family, whose decline has brought consternation to the stand-patters among social theorists, had its origin in a social structure strikingly dissimilar to the one we are living in at the present time. Had it not been for religious controls and traditional moral dictums we would be experiencing even greater evidences of instability in family disorganization. We must recognize

[From Mabel A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill, *Social Disorganization*, Harper and Bros., 1941, pp. 601-603. Used by permission of the publishers.]

that marriage is a way of life which must be suited to the needs of living people. Whenever economic, political, social, moral, psychological, or philosophical problems arise which affect the lives of individuals, the family registers the changes like a social barometer. Either as adults founding a new family or as children of a family long formed, most people live with some reference to their kinship groups. Situations which affect the life schemes of individuals must affect those with whom they are most intimately associated. The imperfect functioning of the capitalistic system affects the wage-earner and the family wage. The changed political status of women has altered the matter of family authority. The religious attitudes of a particular community have a definite bearing upon the basis and philosophy of family life. If one is a Roman Catholic, he expects his marriage to be permanent. If he is an agnostic, he generally dismisses altogether any notion of the mystically sacramental character of the monogamic union. Life in an epoch given over to extreme emphasis upon problems of social welfare and a concerted effort to give the workman better housing, clothes, and food is not in itself conducive to concern for improving one's soul at the expense of one's personal happiness. Hence we find that new attitudes toward marriage and new standards of family life have supplanted the older views. Old norms, old controls have vanished, frequently with

no adequately amended patterns to take their place. Since one must go on living while attempting to solve life's problems, trial and error must inevitably precede any satisfactory adjustment. Perplexed by the problems for which there can be no ready-made solutions once the old formula is discarded, men and women have been blindly experimenting in the hope that they may somehow work out a satisfying basis for establishing marriage under modern conditions.

Overwhelmed by the immediate and personal nature of their problems, few of the experimenters or their critics have recognized the extent to which their lives have been enmeshed in the complex social situation. Often enough the Johns and Marys have been adjudged selfish and unworthy because they sought release from marriage which had proved disillusioning. In reality, they have only been blinded by the romanticism that has characterized our generally accepted standards of courtship. They have faced economic crises which were engendered by a decadent capitalistic society as the aftermath of the first World War. They have been irritable because they saw no way clear by which they could pay the rent, the dentist, and at the same time repay their social debts. They have found little mental satisfaction or stimulation in one another's company when one preferred the movies and the other the volumes of Marcel Proust.

### The Emerging American Family

With due recognition of all the diversity in American families, it is still possible and desirable to posit the concept of *the* American family. In a sense it is an ideal construction in that it attempts to concentrate attention upon what is distinctive of families in the United States in comparison with those of other countries. These differential character-

istics are largely in terms of process rather than of structure and represent relative, rather than absolute, differences from families in other cultures. Chief among these distinctive trends are the following:

1. *Modifiability and adaptability* in response to conditions of rapid social change
2. *Urbanization*, not merely in the sense

[From Ernest W. Burgess, "The Family in a Changing Society," *American Journal of Sociology*, 53 (May 1948): 417-422. Reprinted by permission of the *American Journal of Sociology* and the University of Chicago Press. Footnotes omitted.]

that the proportion of families living in cities is increasing but that rural, as well as urban, families are adopting the urban way of life

3. *Secularization*, with the declining control of religion and with the increasing role of material comforts, labor-saving devices, and other mechanical contrivances like the automobile, the radio, and television

4. *Instability*, as evidenced by the continuing increase in divorce, reaching in 1945 the proportion of one for every three marriages

5. *Specialization*, on the functions of the giving and receiving of affection, bearing and rearing of children, and personality development, which followed the loss of extrinsic functions, such as economic production, education, religious training, and protection

6. The *trend to companionship*, with emphasis upon consensus, common interests, democratic relations, and personal happiness of family members

These distinctive trends in the American family will not be elaborated. Certain of them, however, will receive additional comment at appropriate places in this paper.

## THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY

With all the variations in American families, it is apparent that they are all in greater or less degree in a process of change toward an emerging type of family that is perhaps most aptly described as the "companionship" form. This term emphasizes the point that the essential bonds in the family are now found more and more in the interpersonal relationship of its members, as compared with those of law, custom, public opinion, and duty in the older institutional forms of the family.

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### *Survivals*

The American family has had a rich and varied historical heritage, with strands going back to all European countries and to the religious ideologies of the Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant faiths. What is distinctive in the American family, however, has resulted from its role, first, in the early rural situation of the

pioneer period, and, second, in the modern urban environment.

The growth of democracy, in the family proceeded in interaction with the development of democracy in society. Pioneer conditions promoted the emancipation both of women and of youth from subordination to the family and to the community. Arrangements for marriage passed from the supervision of parents into the control of young people.

The rural family of the United States before World War I, however, had progressed toward, but had not achieved, democratic relations among its members. Control was centered in the father and husband as the head of the farm economy, with strict discipline and with familistic objectives still tending to be dominant over its members. Children were appraised in terms of their value for farm activities, and land tenure and farm operations were closely interrelated with family organization and objectives.

### *The Evolving Urban Environment*

The modern city, growing up around the factory and serving as a trade center for a wide area, provided the necessary conditions for the development of the distinctive characteristics of the American family. It still further promoted the equality of family members and their democratic interrelationships, initiated and fostered to a certain degree by the rural pioneer environment. In the urban community the family lost the extrinsic functions which it had possessed from time immemorial and which continued, although in steadily diminishing degrees, in the rural family. The urban family ceased to be, to any appreciable extent, a unity of economic production. This change made possible a relaxation of authority and regimentation by the family head. Then, too, the actual or potential employment of wife and children outside the home signified their economic independence and created a new basis for family relations. In the city the members of the family tended to engage in recreational activities separately, in their appropriate sex and age groups. Each generation witnessed a decline of parental control over children.

This increased freedom and individualization of family members and their release from the strict supervision of the rural neighborhood was naturally reflected in the instability of the family. The divorce rate has averaged a 3-percent increase each year since the Civil War.

Urbanization involves much more than the concentration and growth of population. It includes commercialization of activities, particularly recreational; specialization of vocations and interests; the development of new devices of communication; telephone, telegraph, motion picture, radio, the daily newspaper, and magazines of mass circulation. All these still further promote the urbanization and secularization of families residing not only in cities but even in remote rural settlements.

### *The Ideology of American Society*

Democracy, freedom, and opportunity for self-expression are central concepts in the American ideology. The frontier situation favored their expression in the social, economic, and political life of the people. As they found articulation in the American creed, they reinforced existing tendencies toward democracy and companionship within the family.

Urban life in its economic aspects provided less opportunity than did the rural environment for the exemplification of the American ideology. For example, the development of big business and enormous industries decreased the opportunities for the husband and father to run his own business. But the city greatly increased the economic freedom and independence of the wife and children by providing employment outside the home. The social conditions of the modern city led to the emancipation of family members from the institutional controls of the rural family. The urban family tended to become an affectional and cultural group, united by the interpersonal relations of its members.

## THE FAMILY IN PROCESS

The paradox between the unity and the diversity of the American family can be under-

stood in large part by the conception of the family in process. This means, first of all, that it is in transition from earlier and existing divergent forms to an emergent generic type and, second, that it is in experimentation and is developing a variety of patterns corresponding to the subcultures in American society.

### *The Family in Transition*

Much of what is termed the "instability" of the American family arises from the shift to the democratic companionship type from the old-time rural family of this country and the transplanted old-world family forms of immigrant groups.

Many of the current problems within the family are to be explained by the resulting conflicting conceptions in expectations and roles of husbands and wives and of parents and children. The husband may expect his wife to be a devoted household slave like his mother, while she aspires to a career or to social or civic activities outside the home. Immigrant parents attempt to enforce old-world standards of behavior upon their children, who are determined to be American in appearance, behavior, and ideas.

### *The Family in Experimentation*

The changes taking place in the family have constituted a vast experiment in democracy. Hundreds of thousands of husbands and wives, parents and children, have participated in it. Couples have refused to follow the pattern of the marriages of their parents and are engaged in working out new designs of family living more or less of their own devising. This behavior has been fully in accord with the ideals and practices of democracy and has exemplified the American ideology of individual initiative and opportunity for self-expression.

This experiment in family formation, while apparently proceeding by individual couples, has been essentially collectivistic rather than pluralistic behavior. Each couple has naturally cherished the illusion that it was acting on its own. To be sure, individual initiative and risk-taking were involved. Many individual ventures have ended in disaster. But

actually it has been a collective experiment in the sense that the couples were acting under the stimulus of current criticisms of family life and were attempting to realize in their marriage the new conceptions of family living disseminated by the current literature, presented by the marriages of friends, or developed in discussion by groups of young people.

### ADAPTABILITY *vs.* STABILITY

In the past, stability has been the great value exemplified by the family and expected of it by society. This was true because the family was the basic institution in a static society. American society, however, is not static but dynamic. The virtue of its institutions do not inhere in their rigid stability but in their adaptability to a rapid tempo of social change.

The findings of two recent studies underscore the significance of adaptability for the American family. Angell began his study of the family in the depression with the hypothesis that its degree of integration would determine its success or failure in adjustment to this crisis. He found, however, that he needed to introduce the concept of adaptability to explain why certain families, highly integrated and stable before the depression, failed, and why some moderately integrated families succeeded, in adjusting to the crisis. A restudy of these cases indicated that adaptability was more significant than integration in enabling families to adjust to the depression.

Another study arrived at a similar conclusion. In predicting success and failure in marriage, data were secured from couples during the engagement period. Certain couples with low prediction scores were later found to be well adjusted in their marriage. The explanation seemed to lie in the adaptability of one or both members of the couple, which enabled them to meet and solve successfully difficult problems as they developed in the marriage.

Adaptability as a personal characteristic has

three components. One is psychogenic and represents the degree of flexibility in the emotional reaction of a person to a shift from an accustomed to a different situation. The second component is the tendency of the person as culturally or educationally determined to act in an appropriate way when entering a new situation. The third component of adaptability is the possession of knowledge and skills which make for successful adjustments to a new condition.

Successful marriage in modern society with its divergent personalities, diversity of cultural backgrounds, and changing conditions depends more and more upon the adaptability of husbands and wives and parents and children. The crucial matter, then, becomes the question of the adaptability of the family as a group, which may be something different from the adaptability of its members.

The growing adaptability of the companionship family makes for its stability in the long run. But it is a stability of a different kind from that of family organization in the past, which was in large part due to the external social pressures of public opinion, the mores, and law. The stability of the companionship family arises from the strength of the interpersonal relations of its members, as manifested in affection, rapport, common interests and objectives.

Flexibility of personality is not sufficient to insure adaptability of the family to a changing society. Its members should also be culturally and educationally oriented to the necessity for making adjustments. For example, the prospects of successful marriage would be greatly improved if husbands on entering wedded life were as predisposed in attitudes as are wives to be adjustable in the marital relation. Finally, adaptability in marriage and family living demands knowledge and skills on the part of family members. These are no longer transmitted adequately by tradition in the family. They can be acquired, of course, the hard way by experience. They can best be obtained through education and counseling based upon the findings of social science research.

## 17 • The Rural and the Urban Family

It is all too easy, in thinking about a general concept such as "the American family," to oversimplify it by ignoring significant differences among the varying and complex facts which the concept purports to classify or describe. Within the changing reality of American social and family life, one might expect to find variety rather than uniformity of pattern from family to family. Robert C. Angell finds two significantly different types of family in contemporary America—the "rural" and the "urban."

The family in American society can hardly be treated as a single phenomenon. There is too much variety in its manifestations. But it is very difficult to reduce this variety to clear-cut types. To a considerable extent there are not only class, but regional, and even religious differentiations in evidence. And these all cut across one another. Any simple categorization is bound to give a false impression unless it is realized that the types are "ideal" in the sense that they represent only the forms that *tend* to be called into being by particular broad concatenations of circumstances. Actual families shade gradually from one type to another, and it may be hard to find any that are pure exemplifications.

For our purposes it seems best to recognize only two family types, the rural and the urban. The basic criterion for the distinction is not that of actual residence in the country or in town, but whether or not the family has the character of a productive as well as a consuming economic unit. This criterion has been chosen because it is so influential throughout the whole range of family living that many other characteristics vary concomitantly with it. Professor Roy H. Holmes has shown that the nature of the relationships between farm parents and their children, the attitudes toward town people and the use

made of town services, and the goals for which farm people strive all stem from the nature of the family unit itself, with its strong economic interdependence, its self-direction as a productive unit, and its comparative isolation. Indeed, so important are the derivative effects that we would be inclined to class as rural a family recently transplanted from farm to city. Though cooperation in production will have ceased, the members will still be carrying the attitudes and points of view that derive from such production, and these will determine for the present the nature of the family unit. In the last analysis, then, our classification is in terms of habits and attitudes stemming from the group's relation to economic production.

The rural family is much nearer to the family group of earlier times than is its analogue. This is in part due to the fact that the influences that have given modern life its peculiar character have largely originated in the city and in part, as Holmes has clearly pointed out, to the fact that the nature of the productive process on the farm throws up real barriers to the penetration of those aspects of urban culture that involve changes in family relations. These barriers last, however, only so long as the farm remains a family-enterprise. When agriculture is carried on either

[From Robert C. Angell, *The Integration of American Society*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1941, pp. 135-142. Used by permission of the author and the publishers. Original edition out of print. Lithoprint edition, Overbeck Co., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1947. Some footnotes omitted.]

by large corporations or in communist collective farms the resistance to city influences breaks down. We may say then that the rural family is likely to remain a type distinct from the urban one so long as agriculture remains dominantly a matter of small holdings operated by families.

The rural family is at once a biosocial group and an economically productive unit. It is both a true community and a business enterprise. This was not an unusual combination in ages past, indeed it was the almost universal case, but the forces of the last two centuries have tended to split the partnership. Today we usually think of the two elements as standing at opposite poles, the one representing a rich sharing of values, the other a highly rational impersonality of pure efficiency. It is the interplay of these two elements in the rural family that gives rise to its peculiar problems and lends to it a great significance in contemporary life.

The physical situation of the farm family has much to do with its distinctive character. In the first place, it is isolated. The family members are thrown together and on their own resources just because their neighbors live at a distance. City influences would certainly have penetrated further in America if the farmers lived in villages as they do in many parts of Europe. Second, the home and the place of work are physically united. They form one piece of real estate. The two worlds of business and family relations are inextricably intermingled. These are completely separated for city men, with the possible exception of small shopkeepers whose families live over their stores and doctors whose offices are in their houses. But even these keep separate accounts for their businesses and their households, whereas in the rural family all is likely to be administered together. And no city family can secure such a complete merging of the two elements as those farm families the members of which not only love each other but love their common workplace.

The rural family is closer to the traditional family type not only because of its more nu-

merous functions and its spatial situation, but also by reason of its great emphasis upon family tradition and continuity. Partly because of their lesser mobility, partly because of their lack of contact with the individualistic, speculative life of the cities, partly because of their love for the land itself, most farm parents hope that one of their sons will carry on with the family farm. Farming to them is not merely an occupation, it is a way of life in which they wish their descendants to continue. Needless to say, this also makes for strained relations between parents and children if the latter have become fascinated by that other world of city lights, business "opportunities," and short working hours.

The rural family, then, has a more all-round life than its city counterpart. It is a more complete community in the sense that within it almost all aspects of its members' lives find expression. It has, however, the defects of its virtues. In a world that has become individualistic and conventional as against communal and traditional it sometimes seems confining. Some see the farm family of the future gradually evolving toward the urban family of today on this account; others believe that this cannot happen in any great measure because of the peculiar conditions under which the farm family must live. Whatever the future has in store, it is clear that the present is a situation of difficult adjustment, for true communities find themselves somewhat out of place in a world of rational, differentiated, accessible groups.

Passing over the village family as a transitional type, we are confronted by a very different picture when we come to regard the city family. The work, instead of being done in common, is divided into two types—that which the father does away from home, and that which the mother, with some assistance from the children, does in the home. The father's job is a reality to the children chiefly because it brings in an income which they are eager to help consume. They know in a general way what their father does, but in many cases they have never seen him at work, and in some cases they have no conception of the work's significance to the larger life.

Not only are the activities constituting the basic source of the family's livelihood performed outside the home, but much of the processing of consumers' goods formerly done in the home has been taken over by specialized agencies. There is less home canning, less sewing, less baking, less washing and dry cleaning. Such services are today performed mechanically at so low a cost that most housewives prefer to spend a little more money and save themselves the corresponding work. This gives the woman whose family is not large sufficient time for leisure activities, and at the same time it relieves the children of home chores. But since city conditions make land expensive, houses tend to have small yards and a large percentage of families live in flats or apartments. The opportunities for recreation in and about the home are therefore few. Correspondingly, enticing means of recreation are available at a distance. Playgrounds, moving pictures, amusement parks, clubs, and gay shop windows beckon, and mother and children answer—but not together. Thus the family is likely to find itself gathered as a group for the first time at the evening meal. This is the time, if ever, when the urban family achieves its sense of solidarity. In well-integrated families such meal-times give the opportunity for each member to bring back to the whole his experiences of the day for the edification, counsel, or amusement of the others. A real exchange and sharing of such experiences makes a good substitute for the common work of the farm family. Attitudes of affection and respect are developed as well as common values. But unfortunately this picture of the evening meal is perhaps not typical. In many families the father comes home tired from a monotonous day's grind, or the mother has been unable to make the budget stretch to cover some needed item, or the son has got into mischief in company with the rest of his gang. Then the meal is a time of complaint or recrimination, and the best chance that the family has for feeling its unity is lost.

The evening hours are likely to suffer from the same differentiation of interests as the daytime ones. The father often wants a little

recreation with his friends at a lodge hall or a billiard parlor. Even if he and his wife go out together, they seldom take the children. And if they both stay home, like as not the children are off to a movie or take the automobile to go "joy riding" with their friends. Not very common is the old-fashioned family circle with the father reading his paper, the mother sewing, and the children doing their lessons. The city has created too many attractions that compete with the fireside.

The city family has less unity than formerly in part because of its reduced size. The decline in the birth rate has been so marked that there are many families with either no children or only one, and two has become the modal number for the cities. This means that children do not find playmates within their own homes so much as they formerly did, that there are often not enough people to play family games, and that there is not that full companionship of which those who come out of large families so frequently speak.

The lack of playmates at home, the cramped quarters which discourage the bringing of friends there, the attractiveness of commercial amusements and playgrounds, and the absorption in the extracurricular activities of the school have brought about a real separation between parents and children. The two Middletown books document the fact beyond question.<sup>1</sup> This situation has been blamed as a contributing factor, if not the chief one, to our high rate of juvenile delinquency. Accordingly a strong counter-movement, whose aim is to reintegrate the family, has set in during the last decades. Women's clubs study child care, universities and colleges offer courses in child psychology and child development, psychiatric clinics are set up to deal with problem children and to educate their parents. Thus the more enlightened portion of the population is aware of the problem. We can imagine the parents saying, "We must remember to play with our

<sup>1</sup> Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown* (New York, 1929), Chap. 11, and *Middletown in Transition* (New York, 1937), Chap. 5.



children." And no doubt many of them do. But it is equally certain that many of them do not, for the tide setting the other way is too strong for them to breast. They go with the current, and the children go off to play with their fellows.

This whole situation may be interpreted as the attempt to regain rationally and by effort that family companionship which was formerly unconscious and effortless. Whether the family can be held together or even strengthened as long as the world around it is so rampantly individualistic is a question that only time can answer. Without a change toward greater integration in the surrounding culture it seems doubtful.

The split between parents and children is often matched by one between husband and wife. The same general forces of differentiation of interests and individualism are respon-

sible. The fact that, although such a split does not always result in divorce, one out of every six marriages in these days comes to that termination is decisive testimony to the amount of disharmony between husbands and wives. Undoubtedly one of the factors in this situation is the attitude toward marriage itself. In a time of almost exclusive emphasis upon romantic love many young men and women enter marriage with impossibly blissful notions regarding it. The subsequent realization that the opposite partner has queer opinions and even faults of character is such a shock to these romantic preconceptions as to shake the marriage to its foundations. Less exaggerated hopes and more willingness to regard marriage as a creative experience in which people work out their lives, rather than as a Paradise into which they enter immediately, would have a salutary influence.

## 18 • Parent-Youth Conflict

"Juvenile delinquency" has become a popular, though often misleading, label in discussions of the problems of adolescents in today's world. Troubled adults point to the accentuated conflict in standards and outlooks between adolescents and adults, particularly parents, as evidence of, if not a cause of, delinquency. How can we account for this accentuated conflict between young people and their parents—and, by extension, between young people and their teachers, who work, at least in part, in the role of parent-substitute? Kingsley Davis attempts to answer these questions on the basis of social and psychological evidence and principles.

Why does contemporary Western civilization manifest an extraordinary amount of parent-adolescent conflict? In other cultures, the outstanding fact is generally not the rebelliousness of youth, but its docility. There is practically no custom, no matter how tedious or painful, to which youth in primitive

tribes or archaic civilizations will not willingly submit. What, then, are the peculiar features of our society which give us one of the extremest examples of endemic filial friction in human history?

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[From Kingsley Davis, "The Sociology of Parent-Youth Conflict," *American Sociological Review*, 5 (Aug. 1940): 523-535. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

### *The Rate of Social Change*

The first important variable is the rate of social change. Extremely rapid change in modern civilization, in contrast to most societies, tends to increase parent-youth conflict, for within a fast-changing social order the time interval between generations, ordinarily but a mere moment in the life of a social system, becomes historically significant, thereby creating a hiatus between one generation and the next. Inevitably, under such a condition, youth is reared in a milieu different from that of the parents; hence the parents become old-fashioned, youth rebellious, and clashes occur which, in the closely confined circle of the immediate family, generate sharp emotion.

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Not only are parent and child, at any given moment, in different stages of development, but the content which the parent acquired at the stage where the child now is was a different content from that which a child is now acquiring. Since the parent is supposed to socialize the child, he tends to apply the erstwhile but now inappropriate content. . . . He makes this mistake, and cannot remedy it, because, due to the logic of personality growth, his basic orientation was formed by the experiences of his own childhood. He cannot "modernize" his point of view, because *he* is the product of those experiences. He can change in superficial ways, such as learning a new tune, but he cannot change (or *want* to change) the initial modes of thinking upon which his subsequent social experience has been built. To change the basic conceptions by which he has learned to judge the rightness and reality of all specific situations would be to render subsequent experience meaningless, to make an empty caricature of what had been his life.

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Though the disparity in chronological age remains constant through life, the precise physiological differences between parent and offspring vary radically from one period to another. The organic contrasts between parent and *infant*, for example, are far different from those between parent and adolescent.

Yet whatever the period, the organic differences produce contrasts (as between young and old) in those desires which, at least in part, are organically determined. Thus, at the time of adolescence the contrast is between an organism which is just reaching its full powers and one which is just losing them. The physiological need of the latter is for security and conservation, because as the superabundance of energy diminishes, the organism seems to hoard what remains.

Such differences, often alleged (under the heading of "disturbing physiological changes accompanying adolescence") as the primary cause of parent-adolescent strife, are undoubtedly a factor in such conflict, but, like other universal differences to be discussed, they form a constant factor present in every community, and therefore cannot in themselves explain the peculiar heightening of parent-youth conflict in our culture.

The fact is that most societies avoid the potential clash of old and young by using sociological position as a neutralizing agent. They assign definite and separate positions to persons of different ages, thereby eliminating competition between them for the same position and avoiding the competitive emotions of jealousy and envy. Also, since the expected behavior of old and young is thus made complementary rather than identical, the performance of cooperative functions is accomplished by different but mutually related activities suited to the disparate organic needs of each, with no coercion to behave in a manner unsuited to one's organic age. In our culture, where most positions are *theoretically* based on accomplishment rather than age, interage competition arises, superior organic propensities lead to a high evaluation of youth (the so-called "accent on youth"), a disproportionate lack of opportunity for youth manifests itself, and consequently, arrogance and frustration appear in the youth, fear and envy, in the old.

### *Psychosocial Differences: Adult Realism vs. Youthful Idealism*

The decelerating rate of socialization (an outgrowth both of the human being's organic development, from infant plasticity to senile

rigidity, and of his cumulative cultural and social development), when taken with rapid social change and other conditions of our society, tends to produce certain differences of orientation between parent and youth.

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Though both youth and age claim to see the truth, the old are much more conservatively realistic than the young, because on the one hand they take Utopian ideals less seriously and on the other hand take what may be called operating ideals, if not more seriously, at least more for granted. Thus, middle-aged people notoriously forget the poetic ideals of a new social order which they cherished when young. In their place, they put simply the working ideals current in the society. There is, in short, a persistent tendency for the ideology of a person as he grows older to gravitate more and more toward the *status quo* ideology, unless other facts (such as a social crisis or hypnotic suggestion) intervene. With advancing age, he becomes less and less bothered by inconsistencies in ideals. He tends to judge ideals according to whether they are widespread and hence effective in thinking about practical life, not according to whether they are logically consistent. Furthermore, he gradually ceases to bother about the *untruth* of his ideals, in the sense of their failure to correspond to reality. He assumes through long habit that, though they do not correspond perfectly, the discrepancy is not significant. The reality of an ideal is defined for him in terms of how many people accept it rather than how completely it is mirrored in actual behavior. Thus, we call him, as he approaches middle age, a realist.

The young, however, are idealists, partly because they take working ideals literally and partly because they acquire ideals not fully operative in the social organization. Those in authority over children are obligated as a requirement of their status to inculcate ideals as a part of the official culture given the new generation. The children are receptive because they have little social experience—experience being systematically kept from them (by such means as censorship, for example, a large part of which is [designed] to “protect”

children). Consequently, young people possess little ballast for their acquired ideals, which therefore soar to the sky, whereas the middle-aged, by contrast, have plenty of ballast.

This relatively unchecked idealism in youth is eventually complicated by the fact that young people possess keen reasoning ability. The mind, simply as a logical machine, works as well at 16 as at 36. Such logical capacity, combined with high ideals and an initial lack of experience, means that youth soon discovers with increasing age that the ideals it has been taught are true and consistent are not so in fact. Mental conflict thereupon ensues, for the young person has not learned that ideals may be useful without being true and consistent. As a solution, youth is likely to take action designed to remove inconsistencies or force actual conduct into line with ideals, such action assuming one of several typical adolescent forms—from religious withdrawal to the militant support of some Utopian scheme—but in any case consisting essentially in serious allegiance to one or more of the ideal moral systems present in the culture.

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While the germ of this contrast between youthful idealism and adult realism may spring from the universal logic of personality development, it receives in our culture a peculiar exaggeration. Social change, complexity, and specialization (by compartmentalizing different aspects of life) segregate ideals from fact and throw together incompatible ideologies while at the same time providing the intellectual tools for discerning logical inconsistencies and empirical errors. Our highly elaborated burden of culture, correlated with a variegated system of achieved vertical mobility, necessitates long years of formal education which separate youth from adulthood, theory from practice, school from life.

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#### *Sociological Differences: Parental Authority*

Since social status and office are everywhere partly distributed on the basis of age, person-

ality development is intimately linked with the network of social positions successively occupied during life. Western society, in spite of an unusual amount of interage competition, maintains differences of social position between parent and child, the developmental gap between them being too clear cut, the symbiotic needs too fundamental, to escape being made a basis of social organization. Hence, parent and child, in a variety of ways, find themselves enmeshed in different social contexts and possessed of different outlooks. The much publicized critical attitude of youth toward established ways, for example, is partly a matter of being on the outside looking in. The "established ways" under criticism are usually institutions (such as property, marriage, profession) which the adolescent has not yet entered. He looks at them from the point of view of the outsider (especially since they affect him in a restrictive manner), either failing to imagine himself finding satisfaction in such patterns or else feeling resentful that the old have in them a vested interest from which he is excluded.

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The first thing to note about parental authority, in addition to its function in socialization, is that it is a case of authority within a primary group. Simmel has pointed out that authority is bearable for the subordinate because it touches only one aspect of life. Impersonal and objective, it permits all other aspects to be free from its particularistic dominance. This escape, however, is lacking in parental authority, for since the family includes most aspects of life, its authority is not limited, specific, or impersonal. What, then, can make this authority bearable? Three factors associated with the familial primary group help to give the answer: (1) the child is socialized within the family, and [since he therefore knows] nothing else and [is] utterly dependent, the authority of the parent is internalized, accepted; (2) the family, like other primary groups, implies identification, in such a sense that one person understands and responds emphatically to the sentiments of the other, so that the harshness of authority is ameliorated; (3) in the intimate interac-

tion of the primary group, control can never be purely one-sided; there are too many ways in which the subordinated can exert the pressure of his will. When, therefore, the family system is a going concern, parental authority, however inclusive, is not felt as despotic.

A second thing to note about parental authority is that while its duration is variable (lasting in some societies a few years and in others a lifetime), it inevitably involves a change, a progressive readjustment, in the respective positions of parent and child—in some cases an almost complete reversal of roles, in others at least a cumulative allowance for the fact of maturity in the subordinated offspring.

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On the one hand, the young person, in the stage of maximum socialization, is, so to speak, *moving into* the social organization. His social personality is expanding, *i.e.*, acquiring an increased amount of the cultural heritage, filling more powerful and numerous positions. His future is before him, in what the older person is leaving behind. The latter, on the other hand, has a future before him only in the sense that the offspring represents it. Therefore, there is a disparity of interest, the young person placing his thoughts upon a future which, once the first stages of dependence are passed, does not include the parent, the old person placing his hopes vicariously upon the young.

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### *Conflicting Norms*

. . . Rapid change has, as we saw, given old and young a different social content, so that they possess conflicting norms. There is a loss of mutual identification, and the parent will not "catch up" with the child's point of view, because he is supposed to dominate rather than follow. More than this, social complexity has confused the standards *within* the generations. Faced with conflicting goals, parents become inconsistent and confused in their own minds in rearing their children. The children, for example, acquire an argument against discipline by being able to point to some family wherein discipline is less se-

vere, while the parent can retaliate by pointing to still other families wherein it is firmer. The acceptance of parental attitudes is less complete than formerly.

### *Competing Authorities*

We took it for granted, when discussing rapid social change, that youth acquires new ideas, but we did not ask how. The truth is that, in a specialized and complex culture, they learn from competing authorities. Today, for example, education is largely in the hands of professional specialists, some of whom, as college professors, resemble the Sophists of ancient Athens by virtue of their work of accumulating and purveying knowledge, and who consequently have ideas in advance of the populace at large (*i.e.*, the parents). By giving the younger generation these advanced ideas, they (and many other extra-familial agencies, including youth's contemporaries) widen the intellectual gap between parent and child.

### *Little Explicit Institutionalization of Steps in Parental Authority*

Our society provides little explicit institutionalization of the progressive readjustments of authority as between parent and child. We are intermediate between the extreme of virtually permanent parental authority and the extreme of very early emancipation, because we encourage release in late adolescence. Unfortunately, this is a time of enhanced sexual desire, so that the problem of sex and the problem of emancipation occur simultaneously and complicate each other. Yet even this would doubtless be satisfactory if it were not for the fact that among us the exact time when authority is relinquished, the exact amount, and the proper ceremonial behavior are not clearly defined. Not only do different groups and families have conflicting patterns, and new situations arise to which old definitions will not apply, but the different spheres of life (legal, economic, religious, intellectual) do not synchronize, maturity in one sphere and immaturity in another often co-existing. The readjustment of authority between individuals is always a ticklish process,

and when it is a matter of such close authority as that between parent and child it is apt to be still more ticklish. The failure of our culture to institutionalize this readjustment by a series of well-defined, well-publicized steps is undoubtedly a cause of much parent-youth dissension. The adolescent's sociological exit from his family, via education, work, marriage, and change of residence, is fraught with potential conflicts of interest which only a definite system of institutional controls can neutralize. The parents have a vital stake in what the offspring will do. Because his acquisition of independence will free the parents of many obligations, they are willing to relinquish their authority; yet, precisely because their own status is socially identified with that of their offspring, they wish to ensure satisfactory conduct on the latter's part and are tempted to prolong their authority by making the decisions themselves. In the absence of institutional prescriptions, the conflict of interest may lead to a struggle for power, the parents fighting to keep control in matters of importance to themselves, the son or daughter clinging to personally indispensable family services while seeking to evade the concomitant control.

### *Concentration Within the Small Family*

Our family system is peculiar in that it manifests a paradoxical combination of concentration and dispersion. On the one hand, the unusual smallness of the family unit makes for a strange intensity of family feeling, while, on the other, the fact that most pursuits take place outside the home makes for a dispersion of activities. Though apparently contradictory, the two phenomena are really interrelated and traceable ultimately to the same factors in our social structure. Since the first refers to that type of affection and antagonism found between relatives, and the second to activities, it can be seen that the second (dispersion) isolates and increases the intensity of the affectional element by sheering away common activities and the extended kin. Whereas ordinarily the sentiments of kinship are organically related to a number of common activities and spread over a side

circle of relatives, in our mobile society they are associated with only a few common activities and concentrated within only the immediate family. This makes them at once more unstable (because ungrounded) and more intense.

\* \* \*

In a familistic society, where there are several adult male and female relatives within the effective kinship group to whom the child turns for affection and aid, and many members of the younger generation in whom the parents have a paternal interest, there appears to be less intensity of emotion for any particular kinsman and consequently less chance for severe conflict. Also, if conflict between any two relatives does arise, it may be handled by shifting mutual rights and obligations to another relative.

#### *Open Competition for Socioeconomic Position*

Our emphasis upon individual initiative and vertical mobility, in contrast to rural-stable régimes, means that one's future occupation and destiny are determined more at adolescence than at birth, the adolescent himself (as well as the parents) having some part in the decision. Before him spreads a panorama of possible occupations and avenues of advancement, all of them fraught with the uncertainties of competitive vicissitude. The youth is ignorant of most of the fact. So is the parent, but less so. Both attempt to collaborate on the future, but because of previously mentioned sources of friction, the collaboration is frequently stormy. They evaluate future possibilities differently, and since the decision is uncertain yet important, a clash of wills results. The necessity of choice at adolescence extends beyond the occupational field to practically every phase of life, the parents having an interest in each deci-

sion. A culture in which more of the choices of life were settled beforehand by ascription, where the possibilities were fewer and the responsibilities of choice less urgent, would have much less parent-youth conflict.

#### *Sex Tension*

If until now we have ignored sex taboos, the omission has represented a deliberate attempt to place them in their proper context with other factors, rather than in the unduly prominent place usually given them. Undoubtedly, because of a constellation of cultural conditions, sex looms as an important bone of parent-youth contention. Our morality, for instance, demands both premarital chastity and postponement of marriage, thus creating a long period of desperate eagerness when young persons practically at the peak of their sexual capacity are forbidden to enjoy it. Naturally, tensions arise—tensions which adolescents try to relieve, and adults hope they will relieve, in some socially acceptable form. Such tensions not only make the adolescent intractable and capricious, but create a genuine conflict of interest between the two generations. The parent, with respect to the child's behavior, represents morality, while the offspring reflects morality plus *his organic cravings*. The stage is thereby set for conflict, evasion, and deceit. For the mass of parents, toleration is never possible. For the mass of adolescents, sublimation is never sufficient. Given our system of morality, conflict seems well-nigh inevitable.

Yet it is not sex itself but the way it is handled that causes conflict. If sex patterns were carefully, definitely, and uniformly geared with nonsexual patterns in the social structure, there would be no parent-youth conflict over sex. As it is, rapid change has opposed the sex standards of different groups and generations, leaving impulse only chaotically controlled.

## SECTION C

## CLASSROOM AND YOUTH GROUPS.

*19 • The Classroom as a Face-to-Face Group*

One of the most familiar features of the American educational landscape is the classroom group. It is surprising that the classroom has been so little studied *as a group* either by teachers or by social scientists until very recently. Clubs, discussion groups, and recreational groups were studied and analyzed as informal learning groups before the formal classroom received similar attention. But knowledge of the classroom group has been accumulating through sociological and psychological as well as educational research, and there can be little argument that teachers should acquire knowledge about their major medium of instruction. Saul Scheidlinger suggests briefly the elements of analysis that a student of the group life of a classroom must become aware of and take into account in his thinking about the processes and effects of schooling. •

A class is characterized by a complex network of interaction among individuals and among subgroupings. The relationships consist of acceptances and of affections, of repulsions and antipathies. All these vary in their intensity and are subject to frequent change and development. When the class is formed the first cohesive elements are apt to reside in the subgroupings which are based on natural friendships and interests among a few children. Gradually, as the individuals perceive and respond to the teacher, to the broader emotional tone, to the goals and the program—there evolves a group spirit, a common feeling of belonging which now pervades the group-as-a-whole. Under such circumstances one can hear increasing references of the students to themselves as “we”

and as “our class.” Insofar as the group is capable of satisfying the cardinal needs and interests of these children, it assumes an ever greater meaning and importance to each individual. This, in turn, enhances the stability and the motivational strength of the group.

With such an increase in “we-feeling,” there develops in time a structure, a way of organizing the group’s daily life. There is a division of responsibilities; there are also various roles assumed by the students, in response both to inner needs and to group expectations. A class has its leaders, its powers behind the throne, its clowns, pets, executioners, and peace makers. As such a role might become the individual’s major way of getting status in the group, it is quite possible for some students to hold on to it tenaciously (in

[From Saul Scheidlinger, *Psychoanalysis and Group Behavior*, copyright 1952 by W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., pp. 184-186. Reprinted by permission of W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.

Footnotes omitted.]

spite of the teacher's displeasure if it disturbs the class), because his peers expect him to do so.

The group climate constitutes a major determinant in promoting mental hygiene in the classroom. It is logically of similar importance in fostering effective learning. When the program of study is geared to the children's needs and they have shared in its planning, it can become part of the group's goals. This implies increased morale insofar as there is self-expression, participation, and the assumption of cooperative responsibility for achieving group objectives. At the first signs of success on the road to mastering the assignment, the esprit de corps grows further still. This is possible only when the group project or assignment is such that the children can attain it with a maximum of independence and without undue frustration.

Furthermore, the motivations are enhanced when group decisions regarding short-term objectives are drawn up with a view toward the long-range goals to be achieved. It should also be kept in mind that values and attitudes are most readily internalized when they are group values.

Undoubtedly, the utilization of group dynamic elements in teaching, as outlined above, is a complicated and time-consuming process. Many teachers can point to good academic performance and output in their classes achieved quickly through the mere use of pressure, of extreme competition or of threats. It is our contention, however, that in such an approach the knowledge, as it is imposed from above, is less meaningful and durable. Furthermore, it is achieved at the cost of weakening the group's stability as well as of individual initiative and fulfillment.

## 20 • Deliberate Use of the Classroom Group for Educational Purposes

The classroom group, like the family, reflects the pressures and patterns of the larger society in which it operates. By a study of their own classroom group and its internal relations, pupils can, therefore, learn from firsthand experience about wider social relationships as well as about the human relations internal to the school. Hilda Taba, Elizabeth H. Brady, and John Robinson suggest how pupils may use their own group life in classroom and school as content for human-relations studies. They point also to some of the reasons why this resource has not been more widely used in the schools of America.

The public school comprises a large part of the social environment of American youth. During the largest portion of the day children are in school, working and playing in a variety of groups and in a variety of atmos-

pheres in classrooms, on playgrounds, in clubs and committees.

That people learn behaviors, values, and attitudes from their social environment is by now a generally accepted fact. In school, as

[From H. Taba, E. H. Brady, and J. Robinson, *Intergroup Education in Public Schools*, American Council on Education, 1952, pp. 124-127. Reprinted by permission.]



well as in their out-of-school lives, students are constantly exposed to education in human relations, whether these experiences are deliberately planned or accidental and regardless of what the children are taught elsewhere. If, for example, the school is divided into small noncommunicating groups, the children are likely to adopt this as the natural pattern of life. If those who stand high in academic achievement are consistently rewarded, children will assume, by inference, that people whose abilities lie in other directions are not so good. From their group experiences, students learn to expect to lead or to submit, and will acquire methods of using authority and of gaining and keeping status. Above all, group life in school is a laboratory in which students develop practical skills for applying whatever concepts about group behavior they have acquired. School culture, therefore, is as powerful a means for education in group relations as the home or community.

Emotional well-being can be either enhanced or inhibited by the nature of a person's group life. The quality of school and school group atmosphere, therefore, determines to a considerable extent whether the individual student's emotional life is enriched or left meager. In group life, children learn to use their own special abilities, learn to satisfy the profound wish to belong, to give and receive attention, and to make others feel wanted.

School association patterns affect children's emotional growth, helping them to develop their own self-conceptions and to become aware of themselves as individuals. Even if the group relationships as practiced are contrary to school policy, it is their influence that will be the more powerful. The Negro child who is excluded from clubs and is shown condescension by teachers learns to feel that he is unimportant, no matter how often a school assembly lauds George Washington Carver.

In addition to being itself an important source of learning, school group life strongly affects academic progress. In an emotionally congenial atmosphere in which satisfying associations are permitted, intellectual performance improves because of group motivation.

Peers become purveyors, interpreters, and stimulators of academic learning.

By using the differences within its own walls, the school can provide opportunities for developing cosmopolitan orientation to living with differences. The public school population in America usually includes a wide range of cultural, social, and economic backgrounds—wider, perhaps, than any other institution—and this means that the school is a natural laboratory for education in inter-group living.

Yet, by and large, schools have not used these assets. One main reason is that human-relations aims have not been considered in planning school life and activities. School organization—including activities, clubs, and classroom—has emerged from a multitude of other purposes, and its human-relations results have been accidental. In the schools co-operating with the project, teachers, for the most part, were not even aware that the school's way of living was a direct source of social learning. They attributed such behavior as aggression or inability to work in groups to "human nature," seldom seeing it as related to habits and skills learned in school as well as at home or among friends.

The consequences of this inattention are many. There are, for example, inconsistencies in precept and practice. Students learn one set of social values in class, but live by values entirely different. When the school fails to develop its own unique planned pattern of group living, school patterns tend to emulate those of the community. Residential segregation is paralleled by segregation of schools. Within schools, segregation is practiced in club memberships, curriculum, assignments, and the like. Prestige levels current in the community are imitated by school clubs. If the community is socially stratified, with certain groups protecting themselves by excluding others, exclusiveness is likely to be found in school also. Concepts of leadership in school are borrowed from those used in the community and therefore reflect both their limitations and advantages.

Such an unintentional copying of community patterns, quite contrary to the school's

intentions, was demonstrated in one school which found that its dozen or so activities were lined up according to prestige value assigned to them by students, from lunchroom cleanup squad to the student council. Most of the children from the orphanage were found to be on the cleanup squad, while those from the leading families ran the cherished student council.

When school activities are geared to one cultural segment of the community, children whose habits, traditions, economic possibilities, or interests do not meet this pattern are automatically excluded. School parties requiring orchids and formal clothes, club activities demanding expensive equipment in a low-income neighborhood, rules of behavior that make some people uncomfortable but do not help them meet the requirements, all of these place limitations on the composition of the in-group and on social and emotional learnings.

Perhaps most important are prevailing assumptions about heterogeneity and homogeneity. Though heterogeneity should be re-

garded as an asset in group-relations education, schools have tended to deplore and to try to eliminate it. Ability grouping is practiced, formally or informally, without awareness of its consequences on human relations. Uniformity in such matters as codes of behavior is sought, blocking chances to develop expectation and understanding of differences. When cultural differences are regarded as a handicap, schools cannot intelligently use them to foster human-relations skills and insights. The school's concern and efforts thus have all too frequently been focused on objectives that inadvertently undermine human relations.

Another important reason why schools have not used their valuable assets to promote better intergroup relations is that they have not considered this a legitimate function of the school. School activities are treated largely as rewards for success in other areas, instead of as opportunities for training. High academic standing and good citizenship thus become the criteria for participating in school life.

## 21 • Youth Groups as Educational Agencies

Teachers frequently do not understand or appreciate the many other agencies which, in the modern community, have a share in the education of children and young people. The more traditional partners, the home and the church, are easily recognized. What of the other partners which have entered the educational scene more recently? More concretely, what educational problems and opportunities are presented by the youth organizations which are very much a part of nearly every American community today? The selection that follows has been taken from the American Youth Commission's comprehensive answer to this question.

Most of the organizations which young people join are either sponsored or controlled by adults, or made up mainly of adults in their active membership. Almost every type

[From a statement adopted by the American Youth Commission, April 15, 1941, reprinted in M. M. Chambers, *Youth-Serving Organizations*, American Council on Education, 1941, pp. 219-221. Used by permission.]

of adult organization—political, fraternal, social, commercial, labor, agricultural—includes some members under 25, or even under 21. In some cases there are special junior sections in which the young members serve a kind of apprenticeship. The junior sections are often of great value as training schools and as a channel through which the younger members can express themselves.

The advantages of close association between young people and older members are so great that any organization devoted to a particular objective should normally provide for the inclusion of interested young people. For the actual accomplishment of results, as distinguished from practice in free discussion, it is common experience that youth can do more in conjunction with adults than in separate organizations of youth alone.

### ADULT-SPONSORED YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to distinctly adult societies with a minority of young members, there are two types of organization sponsored by adults that enroll large numbers of young people: the religious youth societies and the so-called character-building organizations for boys, girls, young men, and young women.

The importance of these groups can hardly be exaggerated. They include large numbers of young people, and because of their long history their former membership includes past generations of youth who are now adults, even aged persons. They have been a steady influence, particularly in the recent years of stress when young people have had to face unusual problems. The religious and character-building organizations, which reach young people both inside and outside the churches, share a deep concern for moral values. They also provide a diversified program of leisure-time activity. Both types of organization afford opportunities for young people to exercise initiative on their own behalf. To be sure, it is usually so much easier and apparently safer for adults to make the decisions, that most of the programs are conceived, supervised, and dominated by adults.

Yet the fact is recognized in theory, and sometimes in practice, that the only way for young people to learn to be responsible is by carrying responsibilities. Youth are quick to realize when "youth leadership" is unreal, and many of them react by losing interest and by looking for other associations in which more vital relations can be found.

In the adult-sponsored organizations that provide real opportunities for initiative on the part of youth, much of the most effective, stable, and valuable youth leadership is found. In such organizations, also, there is often much valuable discussion of public questions, with the participation but not the domination of interested adults. When conducted in cooperation with other races and other religious creeds, such discussions are particularly useful, building greater understanding and tolerance, a realization of the needs of youth as a whole, and a sense of the dangers of apathy in the face of social problems. The fundamental beliefs common to all religious faiths can be translated into living social advances only if there is freedom to learn the causes of unrest and to discuss possible remedies.

### YOUTH-LED ORGANIZATIONS

In America, where the forming of organizations is a universal habit, young people for many years have naturally insisted on having their own clubs, fraternities, and associations, free from adult interference. It is equally natural that the older people have often been critical of these youthful activities, and in many cases have taken measures to control or suppress them.

Healthy young people are prone to rebel against the world as they find it. They gain some little freedom and in due time settle down to defending the *status quo* against the following generation. We may recognize this normal and immemorial conflict of the generations as a fact of human nature without being obliged to accept it as the sole basis of judgment on present-day youth organizations.

The current youth-led organizations, it is

important to remember, are not so universally devoted to public questions as might be supposed. Actually a very large number of them are still the familiar social clubs and fraternities devoted mainly to personal enjoyment and campus politics. Their existence presents no problems that have not been equally pressing, in one form or another, for the past fifty years. An active interest in economic and political problems is not the most general characteristic of American young people, even at the present time.

Depressed economic conditions, however, brought an increasing number of youth associations devoted to the discussion of public affairs. Many organizations for this specific purpose are found in the colleges, though it is true that the membership is usually relatively small. In addition, there have been formed local youth councils in a number of cities, with membership drawn from a wide variety of other organizations. The American Youth Congress is a similar organization, on a national scale, with delegates coming from many organizations, though often not as official representatives.

In the local youth councils, representatives of the religious and other character-building organizations of youth have taken a prominent part. Social, political, labor, racial, and other societies having youth membership have been represented, together with student groups, community center groups, and various independent social and athletic clubs of young people.

The local councils have varied in their practice in regard to accepting as voting members the adult representatives of organizations serving youth, but in almost all cases such representatives have been welcomed and have taken active part in discussions.

The main service of the local youth councils has been to provide a forum for the discussion of community problems as they affect youth. Education, recreation, and employment questions can often be handled most effectively at the community level, where most of the pertinent facts are available to those participating in discussion. Young people coming from different backgrounds of expe-

rience can gain a balanced knowledge of community affairs, which is of great value as a preparation for their duties as citizens.

National meetings of young people for the discussion of public questions necessarily involve peculiar difficulties to which the local youth councils are much less subject. Meetings with the potentialities for publicity afforded by any national gathering are particularly attractive to those bent on protest and who therefore tend to be present in force. Because of this factor and also because of the expense involved in travel, the attendance at any national meeting under youth leadership may easily fall short of being representative geographically or in any other way. Difficulties of this kind were exemplified at the national meeting of the American Youth Congress a few months ago.

National organizations and local youth councils have all been retarded in their growth by the general suspicion and hostility that commonly attaches to any organization actively discussing controversial questions which is sponsored and directed by youth. In some cases this opposition has resulted in the abandonment of the enterprise or in the withdrawal of certain organizations that should be represented if the participants are to have the benefit of all shades of opinion. Doubtless connected with the same cause is the chronic scarcity of funds which has acted as a severe handicap to the work of all youth-led organizations.

## DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Commission recognizes that youth organizations for discussion of public questions form a small part of the total number, and that social, religious, athletic, and other associations are of great importance and value. The chief problem of immediate interest, however, is the attitude that should be taken by adults and by youth toward these discussion organizations.

In the Commission's opinion, there is no effective way to train large numbers of competent citizens for participation in public af-

fairs which does not include actual practice in the discussion of public questions. The tendency for such discussions to be one-sided and ill-informed is not a peculiarity of youth. This tendency is equally apparent and far more dangerous among adults who have, or may acquire, actual power over public policy. It is therefore highly desirable that young people who are not yet in a position to exert any great influence on the adult world should occupy themselves in learning how to lead their contemporaries and how to choose and reject leadership. This process is not different from other educational activities which are best carried on at an age and under circumstances that minimize the dangers involved in mistakes or false starts.

Like all educational activities that create a disturbance, youthful discussion may be irritating to many adults, but should not be suppressed on that account. The young people are learning what kind of public speaking is effective, what behavior will bring from the press either praise, silence, ridicule, or condemnation, what causes appropriations to be granted or withheld, which leadership wears well and which is ephemeral, and all the similar types of knowledge that they will find useful as mature citizens. It is not to be supposed that only the vocal leaders are learning, at the expense of the mass of their followers. Those who sit and do nothing but observe the proceedings may often gain more understanding than their more articulate fellows. Together they are in process of growing up.

Because of the importance of the educational processes to which youth-led organizations can contribute, the Commission believes that they can have major values. In any event, the violent and hysterical persecution of young intellectual radicals is in itself a childish procedure. No doubt there are organized foreign spy systems in this country, with which the authorities are bound to deal, but they should be distinguished from the normal exploratory activities of young people who seek to find solutions for our admittedly unsolved social problems. Moreover, the tendency to suppress youth by refusing to allow them the small sums needed for financ-

ing their societies, or by intimidating possible contributors, is unworthy of sensible adult attitudes toward the educational process.

Notwithstanding the difficulties youth-led organizations are now undergoing, the Commission is convinced that, in some form, they are here to stay. It therefore feels impelled to make some comment on ways by which such organizations may improve their standing in the eyes of the American people.

The practice of free speech undoubtedly includes the possibility of embarrassing one's friends and doing harm to one's own interests. A study of adult organizations as well as those of youth will readily confirm the truth of this observation. Young people who desire to influence public opinion should therefore give thought to one aspect of their situation which they sometimes overlook, namely, that while adults often do not appreciate youth attitudes, young people may have even greater difficulty in apprehending the attitudes of adults. Every adult has had the experience of being young, but no youth has had the experience of being an adult. To compensate so far as possible for this lack of experience, all youth organizations should take special care to avoid outraging the adult community through conspicuous bad manners and through gross failure to give a hearing to adult points of view. This is an elementary rule for any youth organization dealing with controversial topics which is interested in self-preservation and effective action.

Moreover, any youth group which presents itself to the public as a comprehensive organization should adopt policies calculated to result in fact in a diversified and broadly representative membership. Among other things, this means that when youth organizations select speakers for their public occasions, it is imperative to provide so far as possible a balanced representation of different points of view. If some of the points of view upon presentation seem lacking in intelligence or honesty, they should nevertheless be heard courteously, a rule of conduct which may be commended to audiences of adults as well as of youth. A willingness to hear more than

one view is essential to the maintenance of the American tradition of free speech.

## CONCLUSION

Above all, it is imperative for each of us to recognize that the principle of free speech and assembly is established as the safeguard of democracy. It should not be mistaken for a menace. If events similar to those in the

dictatorships were to happen here, they would not be the result of discussion or propaganda. They would be the end product of economic paralysis, uncontrolled monopoly, unemployment, and poverty. To distract attention from the real and dangerous diseases that threaten democracy by hysterical rejection of the curative though irritating processes of public discussion is un-American and might be suicidal.

## SUMMARY

American schools must carry on their work in a multigroup society, for this is the kind of society America has become today. Basic problems for the program of the schools, as well as for the organization and conduct of the teaching profession, stem from the profusion and struggle of organized interest groups in a society in which the local community no longer provides a stable unit of social organization. Educators can no longer assume an unchanging family as a partner in the educational enterprise. They must face the problem of changing the school to fit the changing educational impact of family life on children and young people. Moreover, educators must come to terms with youth agencies and organizations as new and unaccustomed partners within the educational enterprise. Finally, teachers can no longer take for granted the traditional classroom organization. They must learn to deal with the classroom consciously and deliberately as a group that may thwart as well as support and stimulate the learnings for which schools assume responsibility. So much we have gleaned from our study of social groups.

But there are other groupings in American society which need also to be taken into account in analyzing the contemporary educational task. More massive groupings, which follow lines of different ethnic origins and backgrounds among our people and of differing socio-economic status, are interwoven in American experience with the groups already studied. The educational significance of these more massive groupings needs to be considered next.

## THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. It is sometimes asserted that community life has not declined, that community allegiance and influence are as strong as ever. Assess the argument in support of the proposition that local communities have declined in their influence upon the individual. What assumptions are made in the argument? Are the facts accurately presented? Do they justify the conclusion? If not, what additional facts would be required to support it?

2. If it is true that organized groups are now significant forces in American society, what bearing does this fact have upon the work of the teacher? Upon the administration of the school? Upon the child in the community?

3. Make a list of the things children used to do in the home in the period around 1890. Interview a number of urban parents to find out what children now do in the home. Make a similar survey of a number of rural parents. Compare the two lists with the list of what children did in the 1890's. What similarities and differences do you find? What is the significance of these to the teacher?

4. What are some of the advantages of using the classroom group in the process of instruction? What dangers, if any, are to be avoided?

5. Explain in sociological terms why so much emphasis is now being placed upon group processes in educational work.

6. Survey a local community to find out how many different kinds of youth groups are to be found there. What relation, if any, should these groups bear to the school?

1. Perhaps the classic discussions of the idea that the local community has declined are John Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* and Carl C. Zimmerman's *The Changing Community*. See also Karl Mannheim's *Diagnosis of Our Times* and Harold Rugg's *Foundations of American Education*, Part Three.

2. For a simple treatment of specialized groups and their role in present-day society see *Democracy Under Pressure*, by Stuart Chase. The undesirable influence of these groups is stressed in this book. A contrary view of their influence is taken in *Group Representation Before Congress* by E. Pendleton Herring. Robert A. Brady's *Business as a System of Power* contains an analysis of business organizations as pressure groups. Much of the book, however, is concerned with business organization in other countries.

3. The assertion that the family has undergone absolute disorganization is challenged by Talcott Parsons, Robert F. Bales, and their associates in *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process*. They marshal evidence that the family is achieving a new stability and is effective in the socialization of the child. The American farmer's life is set forth in *American Farm Life*, by Lowry Nelson, in such a way as to indicate the role of the farm family in education and politics.

4. The influence of the group upon the individual in the classroom is discussed in the 1950 yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, entitled *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*; see Chapters 13 and 17. A more comprehensive treatment of the structure and dynamics of groups is to be found in *Human Relations in Curriculum Change*, edited by Kenneth D. Benne and Bozidar Muntyan; see Part Three.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# Social Classes, Ethnic Groups, and Education



Our study of social groups in the preceding chapter, as well as Linton's analysis of role and status in Chapter 2, have made it abundantly clear that society is not a simple, undifferentiated mass. On the contrary, it is composed of different strata and groups. By itself, the term "groups" suggests simply difference; but the term "strata" suggests, in addition to difference, an ordered hierarchy of superiority and inferiority. There are, of course, many kinds of social hierarchies—many of them confined to some specific activity, as, for example, in a social club, a student newspaper, or a baseball team. More generalized social hierarchies, however, permeating many aspects of human life, have been identified, usually under the terms "class" and "caste." Up to the present time, all complex, civilized societies have been characterized by more or less distinct hierarchies of this kind. Despite the ideal of equality—an ideal that will be explored in Chapter 8—American society, as the selections in the present chapter will show, is no exception to the general rule.

### THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLASS AND CASTE

Although both "caste" and "class" designate broad, general patterns of social superiority and inferiority, there is an important distinction between the two concepts. Caste is rigid and fixed, whereas class is, relatively speaking, open and flexible. "The rules of caste demand that an individual be born, live, and die in one caste."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, "Social mobility in a class system permits an individual during his lifetime to move

<sup>1</sup> W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated?* Harper, 1944, p. 19.



up or down through the several social strata. A man may be born lower-class but in time climb into the upper ranges of society, although ordinarily a person stays in the class into which he was born."<sup>2</sup> Even a comparatively rigid class system, such as that in medieval Europe, permitted some social mobility—occasionally an especially gifted (and lucky) peasant boy rose through military prowess or scholastic ability to a position of power and prestige in secular society or in the church.

The difference between caste and class is, however, one of degree. Theoretically a caste permits *no* mobility across caste lines, although a *sub rosa* mobility not sanctioned by the rules sometimes occurs in fact. A class system, on the other hand, allows some degree of mobility across class lines, but even the most open class structure presents serious barriers to such mobility. Thus, "not permitted" versus "permitted but difficult" (in varying degrees) sums up the difference. The evidence to be presented in this chapter shows that both class and caste exist in the United States, although our classes are much more open than those in Europe and castes are found only in connection with certain ethnic group differences.

### THE MEANING OF "CLASS"

There is considerable confusion in the use of the word "class" in the United States. There seem to be two major reasons for this confusion, both of which merit our attention. First, the American people have, for the most part, been reluctant to admit that American communities are characterized by a definite hierarchy of social classes. Yet they will, almost in the same breath, acknowledge the existence of significant social gradations and locate with considerable precision the position on the social scale of various members of the community.

Undoubtedly any full explanation of this obviously ambivalent attitude toward social class would involve a rather complex sociological and psychological investigation. Some part of the answer, however, is readily apparent. On the one hand, existing social realities compel the recognition and use, in certain situations, of fairly well-defined social distinctions among different groups of people. On the other hand, a frank and explicit recognition of social class structure contravenes the prevailing American ideology in at least two respects. Class implies, as Warner and Lunt have stated, "a hierarchy of social orders or groups, more or less hereditary, but with provision for movement up and down the ladder, in which the different orders are endowed, in unequal degree, with rights and privileges, obligations and duties, in accordance with their position in the social scale."<sup>3</sup> No such hierarchy of social class is sanctioned by American law or by the traditional American political and social theories. Accordingly, many Americans feel that to admit the presence of such a hierarchy in the social structure of American communities is contrary to the American ideal of equality. Moreover, in the minds of a large

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, Yale, 1942, p. 82.

number of people the term "class" has been identified with the Communist theory of a bitter, relentless class struggle, with all of its violent and revolutionary implications. Consequently,<sup>4</sup> there is a deep reluctance on the part of many, if not most, Americans to admit in response to a direct question that their community has a well-defined class structure.

Whether or not the existence of social classes, of the type described in recent sociological studies, is contrary to the American ideal of equality is, of course, one of the many significant issues now confronting the American people. Whatever position one takes on this issue, there is no justification for ignoring or denying the obvious facts. American social classes, as they are revealed by the investigations reported in this chapter, are not classes in the Marxian sense. Indeed, they are not in any sense of the term organized partisan groups. When any sector of the American people wishes to engage in political or economic pressure it usually acts through one or more of the vast welter of organized interest groups described in Chapter 4.

Another source of confusion about class is the fact that American social scientists have used the term in different ways. Historically, class has been defined in economic terms. One group of American social scientists, in accordance with the historical usage, has insisted that the term be used to denote economic hierarchies, generally those indicated by income and occupational gradations. Another group has used class to indicate significant differences in social status and prestige. Both these types of hierarchies exist, and they are, moreover, closely interrelated. But, since they are not identical, this dual usage has engendered considerable confusion and controversy.

### CLASSES AS STATUS GROUPS

In this book we shall deal with both these hierarchies. In the next chapter, we will consider economic gradations under the term *welfare levels*; in the present chapter, *social class* will be used to refer to different levels of social status and prestige.

As we have noted above, these status levels are characterized by differences in social privileges and influence as well as in prestige. They are also closely correlated with wealth, although (except, perhaps, over several generations) wealth is not the sole determinant of class membership. In particular, social classes, as here defined, are distinguished by two characteristics: (1) restriction of intimate social intercourse and (2) a specific "life style."

The members of a social class tend to restrict their intimate social relationships to other members of the same class. Warner, indeed, has defined class as the "largest group of people whose members have intimate access to one another. A class is composed of families and social cliques. The interrelationships between these families and cliques, in such informal activities as visiting, dances, receptions, teas, and larger informal affairs, constitute the structure of a social class."<sup>4</sup> Each social class seems to have its own "life

<sup>4</sup> W. Lloyd Warner, "A Methodological Note," in St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton (eds.), *Black Metropolis*, Harcourt, Brace, 1945, pp. 772-773.

style," or way of life, marked by a particular set of values, attitudes, and patterns of behavior. On the basis of the available evidence, life style would appear to be fully as important as birth and wealth in determining class membership; upward mobility, in fact, always entails the adoption of the way of life of the class into which the mobile person is moving.

The studies of social class which appear in this chapter and in Chapter 7 have had enormous influence in sociology, social psychology, and education in the last two decades. They have also been subjected to severe criticism, but such criticism has been to a considerable extent technical and methodological. Nevertheless, considerable care should be exercised in interpreting and generalizing the results of this research. It must be emphasized that the studies presented here are local, not national. Studies similar to these have been made in a number of communities in various parts of the nation and their general conclusions have been substantially the same. But it is probably true that, in detail, no two communities are exactly alike. Moreover, with the exception of *Black Metropolis* (dealing with the Negro section of Chicago), all of these studies have been made in rural areas or in small or medium-sized cities. Particular care, therefore, must be used in extending the findings of this research to the social structure of our great metropolitan areas. But after all due caution has been employed, it is clear that the research has revealed important facts which the teacher, as well as other students of American society, must take into account.

### ETHNIC GROUPS AND CASTE

Fortunately, there has been less confusion—or less controversy—in the use of the term *ethnic groups*. The term denotes, of course, groups of different racial or national origin. Earlier in the century the United States was often called the melting pot, because it assimilated a population composed of people who came, originally, from many different nations and climes. However, there has usually been a delay of two or more generations in assimilating a new ethnic group into the life of the nation to the point at which they lose their identity as a separate ethnic strain. And, in the case of some ethnic groups, assimilation of this order has not occurred.

As in the case of classes, there have been numerous studies of ethnic groups in various American communities. These studies have shown that even in the case of white groups there is a hierarchy of ethnic-group status and that people from the more recent immigrant stocks are found largely in the lower classes. The rank order will vary somewhat from one community to another, but the data in Table 1, taken from the study of "Yankee City," in Massachusetts, illustrates the general relationship between ethnic group and class status.

In the case of nonwhite groups, including Mexicans of mixed Spanish and Indian ancestry, something approaching a caste relationship sharply separates these ethnic groups from the fabric of white society. The various color castes, however, have developed class hierarchies that resemble in many respects the class hierarchies of the white groups.

But the economic, educational, and social disabilities under which these color castes have often labored have tended to keep a disproportionate number of color-caste members in the lower classes. Again, there are variations in this respect among different ethnic groups and among communities. But Table 2 will give some indication of the impact of caste on class status.

TABLE 1  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLASS AND ETHNIC GROUP\*

|          | Upper-<br>upper | Lower-<br>upper | Upper-<br>middle | Lower-<br>middle | Upper-<br>lower | Lower-<br>lower |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Yankee   | 2.7             | 2.8             | 15.9             | 35.3             | 23.2            | 20.2            |
| Irish    |                 | 0.3             | 5.9              | 27.5             | 53.8            | 12.5            |
| French   |                 |                 | 1.0              | 13.2             | 40.3            | 45.6            |
| Jewish   |                 |                 | 3.0              | 21.8             | 47.6            | 7.6             |
| Italian  |                 |                 | 0.4              | 13.7             | 41.9            | 44.0            |
| Armenian |                 |                 | 1.2              | 17.9             | 50.8            | 30.1            |
| Greek    |                 |                 | 2.2              | 5.4              | 35.9            | 56.6            |
| Polish   |                 |                 |                  | 0.7              | 9.8             | 89.5            |
| Russian  |                 |                 |                  | 4.3              | 25.5            | 70.2            |

\* From W. Lloyd Warner, *American Life: Dream and Reality*, Chicago, 1953, p. 162, Table II.

### EDUCATIVE EFFECTS OF "LIFE STYLE"

Outside of their effect on the school (which will be discussed in Chap. 7), the primary educational significance of the class and ethnic group structures stems from the fact that each of these status groupings is characterized by a way of life—a pattern of beliefs, attitudes, and behavior that shapes, in no small measure, the character and personality of its members. These diverse life styles will be described in detail later in this chapter. But a glance at Tables 3 and 4, from Rubin's study of "Plantation County" in

TABLE 2  
THE SOCIAL-CLASS DISTRIBUTION OF 4933 NEGROES AND WHITES (12 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER) IN "GEORGIA TOWN," BY NUMBER AND PERCENT\*

| SOCIAL CLASS | WHITE  |         | NEGRO  |         | TOTAL  |         |
|--------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
|              | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Upper        | 142    | 4.1     | 5      | .3      | 147    | 3.0     |
| Upper middle | 709    | 20.7    | 24     | 1.6     | 733    | 14.8    |
| Lower middle | 1222   | 35.7    | 138    | 9.2     | 1360   | 27.6    |
| Upper lower  | 999    | 29.1    | 390    | 25.9    | 1389   | 28.2    |
| Lower lower  | 357    | 10.4    | 947    | 3.0     | 1304   | 26.4    |
| Totals       | 3429   | 100.0   | 1504   | 0       |        | 100.0   |

\* From Mozell C. Hill and Bevoe C. McCall, "Social Stratification in Georgia Town," *Amer. Sociol. R.*, 15 (Dec. 1950): 721-729, Table I.

TABLE 3.—WHITE LIFE STYLES IN A SOUTHERN PLANTATION AREA \*

| Criteria  | Upper-middle Class                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           | Upper Class                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Lower-middle Class                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Lower Class                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| ECONOMICS | Large prosperous plantation or business. Financial security. Leisure time in old age. Women need not work.                                                                                                                                                                 | Large- or medium-sized plantation or business. Men may be professionals. Women may work part time, but do not have to (professional or white collar).                                                                                                                                                  | Medium or small farmers, or work for others. Women may work in service occupations, or trades. Have to work all their lives. Some debt.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| FAMILY    | Importance of the extended family, heirlooms. Inter-marriage within the same class throughout the state. Democratic family, but old women retain symbols.                                                                                                                  | Immediate family more important than extended family. Few heirlooms. A democratic family with husband and wife exercising equal authority.                                                                                                                                                             | Emphasis on the immediate family. Endogamy. Emigrants may sever contacts with home. Increasing male dominance in the family.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| RESIDENCE | Old-style plantation home, in town or on plantation—may be reconstructed. Antiques and modern furnishing.                                                                                                                                                                  | Old-style plantation house or modern frame house. More modern furniture than antiques.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Bungalow or rural plank farmhouse. Not much plumbing, ornamentation. Mail-order furniture. Rooms function for many purposes. Old furniture.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| RELIGION  | Presbyterian, Methodist, some Baptist. Church membership more for social reasons than theological conviction. Church leaders. Regional as much as local interests; leaders in both. Mixed and separate men's and women's groups. <i>No-blesse oblige</i> toward the Negro. | Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist church leaders. Social reasons for church participation, some theological. More local and less regional participation and leadership. Less <i>noblesse oblige</i> toward the Negro. Opposed to lower-class whites as ver-tical threat; envious of upper-class whites. | Methodist, Baptist, some sects. Leadership only in some rural churches and in sects. Many non-churchgoers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| COMMUNITY | Usually college. Only professionals are intellectually inclined.                                                                                                                                                                                                           | More local and less regional participation and leadership. Less <i>noblesse oblige</i> toward the Negro. Opposed to lower-class whites as ver-tical threat; envious of upper-class whites.                                                                                                             | Emotional sects or non-churchgoers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| EDUCATION | May provide equivalent to urban "country club set" among younger married couples. Liberal Protestant religious values combined with plantation tradition, paternalistic race-caste values. Clandestine drinking, miscegenation, infidelity. Women protected.               | Elementary school; some trends toward high school. "Practical."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Isolated cliques and clans. Mostly one-sex friendship groups. Take out aggressive tendencies on other poor whites and Negroes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| MORALITY  | Upward—to society in the region; through marriage, economic gain, appropriating symbols of upper class (antiques), home.                                                                                                                                                   | Fundamentalist attitude toward the worldly "pleasures," yet clandestine breaches fairly often.                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Public flouting of the mores.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| MOBILITY  | Downward—through loss of wealth (takes two or three generations for a complete fall, since widows are protected).                                                                                                                                                          | Upward—with education, good job, successful marriage, improved morality, community participation, leadership. Downward—where publicly oppose the mores of the community (morality), especially in areas of economics (industry), education, drink and indulgence, sex.                                 | Small farmers or tenants; work for others. Women may work in service, trades, agriculture. Men and women may not desire to work at all. Heavy indebtedness. Clannish in rural areas. Mi-grants sever contacts at home. Endogamy; male dominance; unstable family relations; infidelities, aggression. Unkempt plank house or cabin; few rooms, items of furniture or conveniences. Old furniture; lack of order. |

TABLE 4.—NEGRO LIFE STYLES IN A SOUTHERN AREA †  
CRITERIA FOR PLANTATION COUNTY NEGRO CLASS STRUCTURE

| <i>Criteria</i> | <i>Lower Class</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                 | <i>Upper Class</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    | <i>Middle Class</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <i>Lower Class</i>                                                                                                                                                             |
| ECONOMICS       | Professionals (teachers), some small plantation owners.                                                                                                                                               | Elementary schoolteachers, domestics, farm owner-operators, artisans, steady workers, tenants. Some indebtedness. Unions stabilized after many liaisons. Both men and women work. Children work at least part time. Increasing education. Women as dominant or more so than men. | Shiftless workers or tenants; wander from job to job as a means for subsistence. Eternal indebtedness. Unstable liaisons. Women dominate household with children. Child labor. |
| FAMILY          | American middle-class values. Father earns a living; wife does not have to work, though usually does. Children attend school (high school and college).                                               | Bungalows or frame houses in midst of Negro community; or on campuses of secondary schools. Missionary Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist affiliation locally or in home towns.                                                                                          | Rent plank cabins on plantations or in town; log cabins. Slovenly; bedrooms dominate. No participation in community churches.                                                  |
| RESIDENCE       | Most interests outside Plantation County. Temporary residence here. Leadership in education, government work. Try to be independent of whites or else utilize them to aid Negroes. Foster race pride. | Leaders in the local community. "Good Negroes" are befriended by whites. Occasional lapses and brushes with the white man's law.                                                                                                                                                 | Get into trouble with local Negroes and (rarely) whites.                                                                                                                       |
| RELIGION        | College and high school; liberal professions. Acculturation to middle-class American values.                                                                                                          | Increase in secondary school attendance; elementary school still dominant.                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Hardly any schooling.                                                                                                                                                          |
| EDUCATION       | Fundamentalist Protestant ideals; some clandestine inconsistencies.                                                                                                                                   | Fundamentalist Protestant ideal: with much lapse in behavior.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Lack of inhibition; publicly flout the mores.                                                                                                                                  |
| MORALITY        | May rise if move to a city or other region and keep professional status.                                                                                                                              | Rise with education, higher status occupation, community activity, stable family life, church participation, morality, acculturation to white values, American middle-class values.                                                                                              | Rise if take on middle-class criteria and norms.                                                                                                                               |
| MOBILITY        |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                |

• From Morton Rubin, *Plantation County*, Univ. of N. C., 1951, pp. 110-111.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 124-125.

the Deep South, will illustrate some of the differences in the ways of life of the different status groups.

Chapter 2 of this book emphasized the fact that persons are shaped by their social environment. It is important, however, for the teacher to recognize the further fact that in certain significant respects social environments may differ sharply—even in the area served by a single school. It has long been taken for granted that good teachers will seek to understand their pupils. No small part of this understanding is a comprehension of the way of life shared by the social groups from which these pupils come. Pupils from different social backgrounds will have, in many respects, different manners, beliefs, aspirations, and motivations. And they will be subject to different social pressures at home and in the neighborhood. A more adequate knowledge of their life styles would prevent the teacher from ascribing to a child or family a characteristic which, in fact, should be ascribed to the entire subculture to which it belongs.

The present chapter is designed to bring together some of this knowledge. The following questions are particularly important in the study of these materials:

1. How are class, ethnic group, and caste defined?
2. What classes and ethnic groups are found in the United States?
3. What differences in life style are represented by these different status groupings?
4. What are the effects of caste on personality?
5. What is the relationship between life conditions and prejudice? •
6. To what extent, if at all, are class and caste distinctions compatible with the ideal of equality?

This chapter has been divided into two major sections—one dealing with the class structure and the other with certain aspects of the ethnic-group structure. In the first section, the initial selection, by MacIver and Page, outlines the general sociological significance of social class. Selection 23 offers two typical examples of the studies on class structure, one from a middle-sized city in New England and the other from a small rural village in the Midwest. Selection 24 summarizes the similarities and the differences in class structure which have emerged from a large number of studies in different parts of the nation. Finally, Selection 25 attempts to depict, through two excerpts, the life styles of the various classes.

The second section of the chapter, comprising Selections 26–29, is concerned with some of the most important aspects of the ethnic-group structure. Selection 26, again from MacIver and Page, sets forth the basic sociological facts and principles with respect to ethnic groups and caste. Selection 27, by Drake and Cayton, indicates some of the major issues dividing Negroes and many whites on the problem of race equality. In Selection 28, a former president of a Negro college, Buell Gallagher, points to the pathological effects of caste on the personality of both whites and Negroes. The last selection, from a famous modern sociological classic, *An American Dilemma*, indicates the reciprocal relationship between life condition and group prejudices.

## SECTION A

## CLASS

22 • *Class as a Social Phenomenon*

Education in the United States is essentially a local matter. Hence, in our study of social class we are interested particularly in the class structure as it appears in the local community. But our understanding of community studies of the local class structure will be considerably increased if the concept of social class is first placed in a broad historical and social perspective. The following selection undertakes to provide this perspective.

In this selection, as in the introduction, social class is defined as a distinct status group occupying a definite place in a hierarchy of status groups. This definition of class, the authors assert, is valid wherever class is found. But the bases of status have varied enormously from place to place and from time to time. MacIver and Page believe, like Warner, that, except for primitive societies, class hierarchy of some type is inevitable. They go on to discuss the importance of free social mobility, the differences among class sentiments, community sentiment, the major types of class sentiment, and the broad social significance of class.

The authors state that in modern society wealth has become the primary basis of social status. As indicated in the introduction, this is not wholly true for any one generation. But over several generations it is probably true that wealth is now the great arbiter of status.

R. M. MacIver, along with William F. Ogburn and Ernest W. Burgess, may be regarded as one of the deans of American sociology. Charles H. Page, a younger sociologist, is best known for his able study of the role which the idea of class has played in the history of sociology in the United States.

Communities are socially stratified in various ways. The sex division is always of major sociological significance, and division into age groups may be, as is often the case in primitive society, a predominant characteristic of the internal structure of the community. But the principal type of social stratification, especially in the more highly developed civilizations, is seen in the phenomenon of *class*. Social classes, like the community itself, are

[From R. M. MacIver and Charles H. Page, *Society: An Introductory Analysis*, Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1949, pp. 348-349, 353-355, 358-360, 378-380. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]



more or less spontaneous formations expressive of social attitudes. They are not, like associations or like "political classes," simply instrumentalities for the furtherance of particular interests. The class system, as we shall see, emanates from and profoundly influences the whole mode of life and thought within the community.

### *Status as the Criterion of Social Class*

A "class" may mean any category or type within which individuals or units fall. We may speak, for example, of bachelors or novel readers or theater-goers or social reformers as constituting a "class." Here, as a rule, we are not even dealing with a group, in the sociological sense. We may think of artists and physicians and engineers and mechanics as classes. But these are occupational categories, not necessarily coherent groups definitely related to one another in a social structure. The various occupations make up *vertical* divisions of the community, whereas the divisions that reflect the principle of social class are the *horizontal* strata, always a graded order. Wherever social intercourse is limited by considerations of status, by distinctions between "higher" and "lower," there *social* class exists. A *social class*, then, is *any portion of a community marked off from the rest by social status*. A *system* or *structure* of social classes involves, first, a hierarchy of status groups; second, the recognition of the superior-inferior stratification; and, finally, some degree of permanency of the structure.

This understanding of social class as a distinct status group provides us with a precise concept, and one generally applicable to any system of class stratification, wherever found. It regards those social differentiations arising out of language, locality, function, or specialization as significant *class* phenomena only when they become closely associated with a status hierarchy. The subjective factor of social status, a manifestation of group attitudes, is always related to such objective differences in the society as income levels, occupational distinctions, distinctions of birth, race, education, and so forth. But these objective differences, *apart from a recognized order of su-*

*periority and of inferiority*, do not establish cohesive groups. It is the sense of status, sustained by economic, political, or ecclesiastical power, and by the distinctive modes of life and cultural expressions corresponding to them, that draws class apart from class, gives cohesion to each class, and stratifies a whole society.

• • •

### *The Criteria of Class Distinctions*

The commonest and the oldest type of social classification is expressed as a dichotomy. Its various forms distinguish the few and the many, the gentry and the commonality, the élite and the masses, the free and the servile, the rich and the poor, the rulers and the ruled, the educated and the uneducated, the productive and the unproductive (the leisure class), and, in the Marxist formula, the *bourgeoisie* and the proletariat. Tripartite divisions are also commonly employed, such as the feudal distinction of noble, burgher, and serf, and the present-day conventional designation of "upper," "middle," and "lower" classes. We may now ask: What principles are involved in these various modes of social classification? How do the different criteria of class distinction affect the character of the social structure?

*The bases of status.* The grounds of status vary greatly from society to society and from one historical period to another within the same society. In a few primitive communities where class lines have not formed, prestige is gained by personal achievement, while in others it rests upon some group-recognized, status-giving factor. Status may be based upon differences of birth, wealth, occupation, political power, race, or, as in the case of traditional China, intellectual attainment. Frequently status is determined by a combination of two or more of these factors. When the attitudes of the members of a community become firmly attached to specific marks of status, when they become a part of the social heritage, they form the pattern of the community's system of social classes. There are, of course, many such systems. Yet the character of the class structure is most clearly revealed

when status is associated with a *single* controlling factor around which the others cohere. We may illustrate this principle by contrasting the type of class system that assigns status on the basis of birth with the type that gives primary importance to wealth.

*The criteria of birth and wealth.* When status is fixed by birth, as in the traditional Indian caste system or in feudal society, the class structure tends to be compact or "integrated" and rigidly stratified at the same time. Structural changes take place, to be sure, but slowly and usually imperceptibly from the viewpoint of the members of such a static system. In feudal and early medieval life, for example, not only did birth determine status for the overwhelming majority but the values incorporated in the mores and sanctioned by the teachings of the church sustained the universally recognized three-class structure of noble, burgher, and serf. Political power and wealth in the form of land-control were, of course, closely bound up with birth as marks of status, but the latter remained the predominant controlling factor of social position until the system itself became undermined by new social and economic developments. So long as birth defined status, vertical social mobility was impossible for all but the few who could move upward within the ranks of the army or the church hierarchies, on the one side, or, on the other, within the historically increasing mobile group of burghers, the artisans and merchants.

The latter groups, the "middle class," were historically responsible for revolutionizing the feudal class system, for they fought for and eventually gained, first in northern Italy and later throughout most of Western Europe and America, a new definition of social status in terms of *wealth*. Here we need not consider the details of this vast historical movement, climaxed by the "bourgeois revolutions," except to note two of its features that came to be of central significance in the class structure of modern Western society.

1. *The redistribution of wealth.* Under the feudal system, land was the principal form of wealth; in fact, the whole feudal structure has been described as an institutionalized

system of land control. But with the growth of commercial, financial, and factory-production enterprise, wealth became redefined, so that land, though remaining as an important type of wealth, was increasingly subordinated to the new forms of money and credit. This was a crucial development in that wealth was "detached" from its feudal institutional setting, from the traditional distinctions of birth, land-control, and status. The evolution of wealth as an "independent" social value greatly weakened birth as the determinant of status and thereby upset the older integrated class system. It permitted not only the rise of wealthy individuals, whatever their birth-rights, the new *bourgeoisie*, but influenced the development of a "detached" science of wealth, the "classical" economics of the nineteenth century. Expanding capitalism, detaching and "freeing" wealth, necessarily stimulated social mobility.

2. *The rise of vertical mobility.* As status came to be more and more defined in terms of the new forms of mobile wealth, and as birth and tradition lost their hold as criteria of prestige and power, an *open-class* structure evolved. The "cake of custom" was broken. A class system came into being that in some degree permitted persons to rise, and to fall, on the basis of their *individual* achievements. Members of the feudal upper class either entered the new system sometimes through marriage, and often indirectly by concealing their contacts with the "vulgar" world of trade, or joined the "decadent aristocracy," a class without function in the new capitalistic age. In the mobile capitalistic societies, therefore, the traditional class demarcations were blurred, and eventually became of only secondary importance.

In feudal times the class structure was a series of demarcated stages. The different classes were marked off by different modes of living, different recreation, dress, and so forth. This *closed-class* system stands in contrast to the relatively open system of modern times. In the latter, a sharply demarcated hierarchy is replaced by a gradient arrangement, wherein the various ranks, though differentially because of their differences of eco-

conomic means, follow the same fashions, view the same spectacles and entertainments, and, generally, share the same values. Only in the open-class system, as we shall see, do worker and banker alike strive to "keep up with the Joneses."

*Competing criteria of status.* Under the conditions of modern capitalism, wealth, then, takes on a more determinative role, and wealth, though in degree associated with mode of living, cultural opportunity, occupational advantage, and political power, is of all attributes the most detachable from personality and from cultural attainment. In democracies particularly the bulwarks of the older class system have been undermined, so that whatever cohesion the new system possesses depends mainly on the role of wealth. Yet the older determinants of status still modify and limit it, and new criteria are often introduced.

In the United States, for example, the "old-line" families, especially in the Eastern and Southeastern states, assert counter-claims of class distinction, and lineage is, in fact, an important status-bearing factor in such cities as Boston and Philadelphia and Richmond. Broader class distinctions are asserted in the name of the pride of "race," such as that between the West European peoples and the "new immigration" from Southern and Eastern Europe, or that between Gentile and Jew. These barriers, however, do not create clearly defined social classes, and some of them are already shown to be transitional lines, becoming less determinative of status in the degree in which cultural differences are merged and group discrimination is broken down. The situation is more complicated in the case of the Negro-White division, a conspicuous status demarcation in this country. Lineage, national origin, religion, and color are criteria of status that compete, at times quite effectively, with wealth. But the more decisive significance of wealth in our society is revealed by the extent to which this value penetrates *all* social divisions and provides a common standard of social distinction.

### *The Nature and Types of Class Sentiment*

We must now consider the socio-psychological aspect of class, the sentiment that characterizes the relations of men toward the members of their own and other classes. This is the aspect that establishes *social distance*, an essential feature of class distinction. "Social distance," as applied to class attitudes, should not be confused with personal liking or aversion; the concept rather refers to that bar to free intercourse between individuals that arises from their belonging to groups rated as superior or inferior in status.

*Class attitudes contrasted with community sentiment.* Class feeling . . . exhibits striking contrasts with community sentiment. If the latter admits no grades, the former is rooted in the principle of hierarchy—the sentiment of class is essentially a sentiment of disparity. Although it unites those who feel distinct from other classes, it unites them primarily because they feel distinct. Above all, it unites the "superior" against the "inferior." It emanates from the belief in superiority, however unfounded, so that class division is really imposed on the lower by the higher classes. Hence class sentiment involves entirely different attitudes, with respect to one another, of the various groups within the hierarchical system.

\* \* \*

Class sentiment, therefore, has no inclusive quality comparable to that of community feeling. Moreover, class attitudes and community sentiment operate to limit and restrain one another. The one divides those whom the other integrates. In less mobile societies, communal tradition, religion, and custom are usually so strong and pervasive that the dividing influences of class or caste cannot prevail against them. In more mobile societies the counteractive roles of the two types of sentiment are particularly noticeable. For example . . . the competitive quality of class sentiment expresses itself in the restlessness of fashion as against the stability of the communal codes of custom. Class feeling

\* \* \*

itself, however, assumes quite different forms.

*Two main types of class sentiment.* Some kind or degree of class sentiment is almost universal in human society. The communist ideal of a "classless society," with respect to social classes, is by no means realized in Soviet Russia, where there are conspicuously different degrees of prestige attached to occupations, party membership, and political position. There are sharp class distinctions in Negro Harlem no less than on Park Avenue. There are distinctions between social classes, based upon different criteria of status to be sure, between the inmates of prisons, between the members of "utopian" communities, even between those who perform slightly different types of work in the same occupation, among the dockworkers, for example.

But while class sentiment is so pervasive, its range, character, and social implications are very different under different conditions. In particular, a distinction should be drawn between *corporate class consciousness* and *competitive class feeling*. Corporate class consciousness is a sentiment uniting a whole group sharing a similar social status. But there is a more personal form of class sentiment that frequently determines the conduct of individuals toward one another without involving on their part any express recognition of the whole groups to which they respectively belong. Class feeling in this sense is one thing, the corporate consciousness of class solidarity is quite another. When Mr. *A* blackballs Mr. *B* from membership in his club, he does not necessarily think of himself as thereby upholding the standards or the interest of a whole class of Mr. *A*'s; when Mrs. *A* patronizes Mrs. *B* or refuses to call on her, she does not on that account necessarily feel her solidarity with a whole order of the "superiors" of Mrs. *B*. Here the response is immediate, specific, personalized, an expression of competitive class feeling.

This type of class sentiment is characteristic of the competitive system that developed in modern Western society. Corporate class consciousness, an obvious feature of the closed or caste-divided structure, has developed in modern society chiefly under the spur of strong

economic incentives, and has gained most strength at the extreme ends of the economic scale, in the struggle to maintain or destroy a predetermined status. "Society," on the one hand, and low-paid wage-earning groups, on the other, most clearly exhibit corporate class consciousness.

\* \* \*

## THE BROADER SIGNIFICANCE OF CLASS

### *Class and the Character of the Community*

The class system at any time reflects and also profoundly influences the whole life of a community, whether a small village or a great nation. Its relation to the whole social structure is apparent if we contrast briefly its different manifestations in various countries.

*The class system as a reflection of community values.* In the United States, as we have seen, there is, on the one hand, a lack of formal (though not informal) class distinctions, considerable class mobility, a relative absence of cultural barriers between classes; and, on the other hand, there is some degree of correlation between class lines and nationality or racial distinctions, a high development of wealth prestige or plutocracy, and a comparatively small growth of a hereditary "aristocracy." In England, by contrast, we find still, in spite of the diminished power of wealth and the extension of political democracy, traditionally deep grooves of class superiority and inferiority, an established, if no longer powerful, aristocracy, supported by still prevalent though weakening historically rooted attitudes, as witnessed by the subservience of many groups toward their social "betters."

\* \* \*

*How the class system affects the community life.* The character of a class system, whether it be closed and rigid, whether it make birth or wealth or military prowess or occupation or intellectual attainment the main determinant of social distinction, greatly influences the modes of living, the

ideals of the group, and the whole process of social selection.

\* \* \*

But we may reasonably infer that whenever a system limits opportunity to privileged groups within it, the society is needlessly losing the aptitudes and talents that might otherwise be brought to light within the ranks of the unprivileged. The fact that more individuals of personal distinction and high social achievement arise in the higher income groups in proportion to their numbers, while sometimes used as an argument for the intrinsic superiority of those groups, might with at least as much logic be made an argument for the expansion of opportunity.

A further serious penalty of a system that limits the use of intrinsic merit is that it establishes other than merit standards, and therefore socially inefficient standards, in the privileged class. This characteristic is not only an aspect of a caste system but also of a competitive plutocratic system. Under the latter a condition peculiarly detachable from personal quality—the amount of one's wealth—is made a ground of esteem, and, moreover, the keeping up of appearances becomes an end of life. "Good form," the conventions and shibbo-

leths of the prestige group, often assumes an importance superior to merit or character. The gain sought by the social climber is a purely relative one, so that the satisfaction of success is speedily dimmed by the new comparisons that each step on the class ladder brings into view. In the middle classes particularly, as we have seen, "respectability" is apt to become a fetish. It becomes the measure, for example, of a "good marriage" or of a "good" political candidate or even of a "sound" economic or political doctrine. Another illustration of the opposition between class standards and intrinsic qualifications is presented by the outmoded system of appointment and promotion in the military and naval hierarchy. Officers, especially in countries with long-established traditions, were apt to form almost a caste, in which ability was subordinated to the considerations of status, so that there was little promotion from the ranks in times of peace. But the necessity created by warfare for technological and leadership skills has greatly altered this situation, giving the man of capacity some opportunity to rise to command, and has revealed the initial weakness of a system that identified the officer with the "gentleman."

### 23 • Class in American Society

Against the broad background provided by the preceding selection, let us examine the studies of social class in specific American communities. Obviously it is impossible to report all of these studies here. But the two that are reported—one of a middle-sized city in New England, the other of a small rural community north of Kansas City—have been chosen because the results are, within limits of local variations, typical of the conclusions reached in the other studies.

In general, five distinct classes have been found, although in New England and the South the upper class often splits into two groups and in one study of a rural community in southwestern Missouri (James West's *Plainville, U.S.A.*) only the three lower classes were discovered. "Midwest" appears to have three well-defined classes, but a few lower-lower families have occasionally lived there. These class distinctions are usually recognized in the community, but not, as a rule, under the names given to them in the sociological literature. Warner notes also that people generally, although precise and

sharp about the class lines in the classes immediately adjacent to them, are rather vague about class gradations at the other end of the scale.

For the most part, two procedures have been used for determining social-class membership. The basic, but more expensive and time-consuming, method is the *evaluated participation technique*, by which the members of a community are asked to evaluate the behavior of other individuals and to rank them in a scale of social status and prestige. A technique involving an *index of status characteristics*—a weighted scale composed of four factors: occupation, source of income, type of house, and dwelling area—produces a composite score which is translated into social class terms.

W. Lloyd Warner is the recognized leader of this type of community analysis. Robert Havighurst and Martin Loeb have been closely associated with Warner in a number of studies. Roger Barker, Herbert Wright, Jack Nall, and Phil Schoggen are psychologists who have studied groups intensively.

### Social Classes in "Yankee City"

Yankee City is a New England community of about 17,000 population. Although formerly a shipping center, it is now an industrial city whose chief manufactures are shoes and silverware. The town is one of the oldest in New England. While possessing a number of ethnic groups, its dominant social tradition is Yankee and what is called Old American. The several ethnic traditions are being modified to fit the older Yankee one. The society is stable and the social change which occurs is comparatively slow and has not disrupted the system.

\* \* \*

The name applied to the upper class of Yankee City is Hill Streeter. The term refers to a "higher class part of town." The name of the upper-upper class is "old family." An upper-upper man believes himself to be a gentleman, and his wife knows that she is a lady. These convictions ordinarily carry a security which people impart to their children along with a pride in their family background and the illustrious lives of their forebears. The upper-upper people are separated from the

lower-upper by knowledge of a lineage in which high social position in Yankee City can be traced back for several generations. This aristocratic lineage, which is traced through the father and mother but preferably through the father, is given the name of "old family" when the members of a class are identified and separated from the lower-upper and upper-middle classes. The upper-uppers ordinarily live in large and well-conditioned Georgian houses which are along Hill Street or in extensions of Hill Street. The houses of the upper-upper and the lower-upper classes, which are the most important symbols of high status, are the most expensive in Yankee City. The two upper classes pay higher rent than the classes below them.

The upper-uppers are professional men or proprietors of the larger business and industrial enterprises—the highest brackets in the occupational hierarchy.

The old-family group comprises but 1.4 percent of the population, has many more women than men, a smaller proportion of young men and women than any other class,

[From W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated?* Harper and Bros., 1944, pp. 19-27. Used by permission.]

and a higher proportion of old people. They marry later than any of the other five classes. There are many maiden sisters and unmarried daughters living in the old houses who seem content to maintain the old homes and gardens and carefully nurture the family traditions while their brothers and other kindred go elsewhere to earn a living or gain renown in their professional careers.

The Hill Streeters attend the Episcopal and Unitarian churches and consciously avoid the Catholic churches and such Protestant ones as the Methodist. The minister of one of their churches must be a strong man and of the right class if he is to maintain his own ideas. He continually feels strong social pressure to say "the right things." No man could long keep his pulpit who preaches a social philosophy antagonistic to the prevailing one of his parishioners. It is possible for him to say things in his pulpit which are considered "a bit daring," but to do this he must have made strong affirmations which have classed him as a minister with "good hard sense."

It should be remembered that the ranking of churches in the United States varies regionally and locally within the major areas. In the Midwest and the South it is the Holiness and Pentecostal churches which are filled with the lower classes. In Southern communities the Methodist churches are often preferred by the local élite, and the Congregational church sometimes is ranked as socially superior.

In Yankee City the upper-upper people participate in associations which are social clubs where topics of interest to the group are discussed. Such interests include history, biography, science, the *ritual* objects of the house and garden, and outdoor activities. The upper-uppers join with the two classes below them to give charity to the lower groups but refuse to allow these recipients to be members of their charitable organizations. They thereby effectively subordinate the takers of their gifts who cannot return these favors and who feel and are felt to be unworthy of admittance to these "organizations of the people who live in the big houses on Hill Street."

In Hometown the distinction between old and new families is not clearly drawn. The

town is too small and too young for such distinctions. The Peabodys are clearly members of the upper classes in Hometown. When one learns that they are referred to as "one of our fine old families" and that Mr. Peabody inherited his wealth and his prestige from his father, who had a substantial inheritance from "the first Peabody," we know that they are at the top of "the small-town aristocracy." Scrutiny of the characteristics of Tom Brown's family reveals that they are not. Later we shall see that they have most of the characteristics of the upper-middle class of Yankee City.

The lower-upper person in Yankee City (his class makes up 1.6 percent of the population) is without a recognized lineage for Yankee City since his family is socially "new"; in the final sense of the word, he does not "belong." He feels this and must compensate for it, for example, by living in perfect houses and surrounded by perfect gardens. He tries to give the best parties, to own the finest cars, to become the best in a particular sport or in some other hobby, or to become highly recognized in the arts or in some other form of social accomplishment. He continues to try to reach the top, but he can never quite succeed, for his judges are his own competitors and those who hold the places above him. Furthermore, the game is stacked against him since he has never had and can never get the one card he must have above all others—gentle birth. Only several generations of living can remedy this matter for him. This he knows, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, but refuses to admit. His struggle goes on, for after all it is better to advance slightly, or maintain his place, than to go down and feel the ridicule of those of his own class and the mockery of those who are his social betters. He recognizes himself as a gentleman, but he knows that he is not completely accepted as one by those who "really count."

The upper-uppers are strong supporters, with a few noteworthy exceptions, of the right wing of the Republican party, but their convictions are tempered with some skepticism about the reasons for their beliefs, and their "liberal education" has made them

aware of other points of view which their secure social position allows them to express but not to feel. The lower-uppers are emphatically Republican by vote and by deep conviction; so too are most of the members of the upper-middle class. Those of the lower-upper class who have rebelled from the rule of their elders are anything but Republican, preferably radical, but these young rebels reverse the position of their elders to demonstrate their freedom from the hateful rule of an inferior upper class which their fellows have accepted in practice.

The lower-upper class shares the old Georgian houses with the upper-upper class. Their houses, like those of the old families, have their own lineages which, by the very listing of the names of their occupants, tell a story of superior status and of better living. If one cannot have a family with a lineage, one can buy and maintain with proper respect a house which has a superior one. Furthermore, one can buy a house which is on Hill Street, whose very name symbolizes social superiority and fine living, which places one at least geographically near and, it is to be hoped, socially "near" the old families. Such hopes as these maintain a behavior which, in the generations that follow, ultimately places these new families in the maturity of time among the old families; and in retrospect these present ancestors will rise in the memories of coming generations from new families to old families. Sometimes, to make sure of this, their successors will actually dig up their bones, since they are now those of an "old family's" ancestors, and remove them from the more common cemetery, and place them in a "better location" in a graveyard where the better people bury their dead. When the sons of their offspring perform this symbolic task they will follow the simple precedent not only of those of their own class but of those families in Yankee City which now feel securely placed among the other old families. All the old families of today were the new families of yesterday.

The upper-middle class, comprising 10 percent of the people, is a superior group of Side Streeters (they are said to be at the side of and not on Hill Street) and are sometimes

thought of as "Homevillers." Sometimes the highest of the upper-middle-class people may be pleasantly surprised by being classed as Hill Streeters by those of less knowledge in the lower classes. The upper-middle class is not fully "socially acceptable" to the two upper classes, but its people are said to be "the good people" and "the respectable people." The manners and tastes of its people are not fully developed in the class sense. There are subtle distinctions in its speech and deportment at the dinner table and elsewhere which the subtle eye of an upper-class Yankee, particularly if *she* be a native, will notice immediately. In their behavior with those above them, there is a certain giving or precedence by the members of the upper-middle class, there is a masked deference to the words, beliefs, and precepts of the superior classes, which helps these middle-class people to gain social acceptance in the larger associations of the upper classes, such as the Women's Club. They are sometimes felt to be "a little vulgar" and not always sure of "how to do the right things." Not all of this class are mobile; many of them are content, and these "good people" are often the respectable community leaders who are "the salt of the earth" to all classes. This is so because, to their inferiors, they "don't put on airs" and, to their superiors, they are "sound and thoroughly dependable."

The great majority of the homes of this class are medium in size but some are large. The upper-middle people are largely Yankee, with a sizable representation of the Irish and a scattering few of other ethnic groups, such as the Jews and Italians. They marry later than any class below them and at about the same age as the lower-upper class.

They belong to the Protestant churches and not to the Catholic churches. They join such churches as the Congregational, Baptist, and Christian Science, but not the Episcopal or Methodist. Most of their children go to the local high school, and only a few of the more socially ambitious parents send their children to preparatory schools.

The Browns of Hometown clearly fit into the upper-middle stratum. They belong to the right kind of associations, live in the right



part of town, and Mr. Brown is a leading businessman in the community. Mr. and Mrs. Brown do not belong to the social clubs of the Peabodys but they do belong to some of the better civic organizations which include people like the Peabodys.

The upper three classes, which compose about 15 percent of the population, look upon the lower-middle members as "respectable" but "belonging to the masses." Some of them are Homevillers but "the little people" of that area. They are Side Streeters who are in the kinds of organizations where "you never see them." Those who are below them know they are Side Streeters and not Hill Streeters, despite the fact that the lower classes often place the members of the upper-middle class in the Hill Street group.

The lower middles (28.4 percent of the total population) are felt to be the top crust of the lower half of the society by those beneath them, by those above them, and by themselves. The lower-middle-class people live in medium- and small-sized houses which are not in the best condition, and are located nearer "the wrong part of town." Their houses are worth far less than those of the three classes above them, but still they are worth considerably more than those of the two classes below them. Their property holdings are also far below the upper three, but again they are well above the lower two classes. They are employed in large numbers in the retail stores.

This class has a smaller percentage of Yankees than any of the classes above it. The lower-middle-class people marry younger than any of the classes above them and older than either of the two classes beneath them. They belong to the Protestant churches but not to the two Catholic churches.

No class above the lower-middle belongs in significant numbers to fraternal organizations or to auxiliary associations; in fact, these classes avoid such organizations. But the lower-middle-class membership is significantly high for only these two types of associations. There is here a sharp break in the kind of participation the classes below upper-middle enjoy in Yankee City. Furthermore,

all the classes above lower-middle are members in significantly high numbers of charitable organizations and social clubs, but the lower-middle class and the other two beneath it are excluded from or avoid such associations.

It is in the lower-middle class that the increase in number of arrests is first noticeable. They account for 8 percent of the arrests of Yankee City. This is four times as much as the upper-middle, but only one-third as much as the upper-lower class. The juvenile arrests are far higher than those of the upper classes and much more like those of the two lower classes. It is in the lower-middle class that such organizations as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the truancy officers are able to take effective action in the control of children and to interfere with the role of the parent in the family system.

The members of the upper-lower class are always grouped with the masses by those above them, by those below them, and by themselves, but they are seldom called "Riverbrookers," for they are above them. They are the largest class, having 33 percent of the population.

Half of their houses are small and less than one seventh are in good condition. The great majority of the upper-lower class are semi-skilled workers, and over 80 percent are above the level of unskilled labor.

The upper-lower class has a greater percentage of ethnic members and a smaller percentage of Yankees than any other class in Yankee City. Only the lower-lower class marries younger than the upper-lower class. It has the smallest percentage of Protestants and is the only class which shows a preference for the two Catholic churches. Only the lowest class has a higher rate of arrest than the upper-lower.

Joe Sienkowitz and his family would fit into the upper-lower class were they in Yankee City. They are mobile ethnics who have climbed out of Boxtown (Riverbrook in Yankee City). While they are poor and "little people," they are not at the bottom of the social heap.

All other classes look down on the lower-lower class. Its members, before all other classes, are of the masses. They are Riverbrookers ("from across the tracks"), or "Boxtowners," or their equivalent. They are "at the bottom" of the lower classes. The lower-lower-class people live in the poorest houses in Yankee City and in the "worst areas" in the community. More of their houses are small and in bad condition than of any other class. Their houses are located in areas which are considered the worst in the community. They pay their rent by the week and less than all other classes.

Over 60 percent of their people are laborers. More of them are unemployed than all other classes.

The lower-lower class, with 26 percent of the total, is the only one which has more males than females, and it leads all others in number of children. It marries earlier, has a larger percentage of juvenile members, and more married people than other classes. In Yankee City its people prefer the Catholic churches, the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist churches, and they avoid the Episcopal and Unitarian churches. They join and avoid associations in about the same way as the upper-lower class.

The lower-lower class is easily the most vulnerable to police interference; 65 percent of all the arrests in Yankee City are from this class and about 11 percent of the members of the lower-lower stratum have been arrested. About one third of the arrested individuals are adolescent. Its family life is more dis-

turbed by the police and its parents are more coerced by the private associations.

The Jones family have all the characteristics of Riverbrookers. The Boxtowners, the Riverbrookers, and their like are found in all American towns; and in most communities they are concentrated in areas which have names indicating lowly status.

It is evident from the foregoing that the several superior and inferior classes of Yankee City, with new and old Hill Streeters at the apex of the hierarchy, with the Homevillers and Side Streeters in the mediate statuses, and the Riverbrookers at the bottom, show a recognition, even if democratically disguised, of a rank order in their lives. Each class in Yankee City is an evaluated way of life in which the several parts tend to conform in value to the general place of a class in the rank order. The class order of Yankee City is a system of interconnected statuses which systematically places the thousands of individuals who live in it and thereby provides these individuals with a coherent way of life.

The Peabodys, in an upper-class status, the Browns, in the upper-middle class, the ethnic Sienkowitzes, in the upper-lower, and the Joneses, in the lower-lower class, all belong to the white race and are socially placed by our class order. But the life of Katherine Green and the lives of the other colored people of Hometown are controlled by another powerful status system which socially isolates and subordinates them.

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### Social Classes in "Midwest"

Evidences of social class are not obvious in Midwest.<sup>1</sup> There are no slums, no mansions,

<sup>1</sup> "Midwest is a county seat town of 700 people in the Corn Belt of the United States."

no exclusive shops, no narrow streets, no milk coats. Nonetheless, close acquaintance with the living conditions, values and associates of the people indicate that there are three

[From Roger G. Barker *et al.*, "There Is No Class Bias in Our School," *Progressive Education*, 27 (Feb. 1950): 107-108. Reprinted by permission of the authors and *Progressive Education*.]

well defined social subdivisions in Midwest. The three divisions correspond rather closely to certain of the social classes which have been identified in larger, industrial communities by Warner and others, as shown below.

| <i>Midwest</i> | <i>Warner</i>      |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Class I        | Upper Middle Class |
| Class II       | Lower Middle Class |
| Class III      | Upper Lower Class  |

Off and on, a Class IV has been represented in Midwest. There have never been more than two or three Class IV families in the town, however, and for long periods of time no member of this class has been present. Essentially, Midwest is a community of three classes. This marks it off sharply from larger American communities with highly differentiated class structures. It is important to note that Midwest is not a classless town. There are "levels" which are sometimes recognized

not infrequently a guest at meetings of these clubs. She has been observed to be present as a guest at one meeting and as a paid helper at the next. This is not unusual. The people of one class know how the people of the other classes live; there is participation across class lines. No person in Midwest is isolated within a single social group. This characteristic of the class structure of Midwest is illustrated by a day in the life of Raymond Birch, a boy of seven whose family is in Class II. On this day, a complete narrative record of Raymond's activities was made. Everything he did and every action of others in relation to him from the time he awoke in the morning until he went to sleep at night was recorded. During the day, Raymond had 131 direct, face-to-face interactions with 10 adults and 279 interactions with 32 children outside his family. The class connections of those with whom he interacted are given below:

| <i>Social Class</i> | <i>No. of Persons</i> |          | <i>No. of Interactions</i> |          |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
|                     | Adults                | Children | Adults                     | Children |
| I                   | 1                     | 7        | 26                         | 91       |
| II                  | 5                     | 11       | 95                         | 49       |
| III                 | 3                     | 14       | 8                          | 139      |
| Negro               | 1                     | 0        | 2                          | 0        |

openly. Within each level, intimate social intercourse is freer than across class lines. Somewhat higher prestige goes with belongingness to the higher levels. Values, living conditions, and kinds of recreation and work differ detectably from one level to another. "Getting on" is in part a matter of "going up." But one has to look rather hard for most of these marks and consequences of social class; and none of them is as pronounced as in many other communities.

A conspicuous feature of the class composition of Midwest is the great amount of contact and communication between classes. In normal social behavior, class lines are frequently crossed. Mrs. Willits of Class III does washing and housework for a number of Class I families. She is not a member of the Class I and II women's clubs. However, she is

It is important to note that none of the social exchanges in which Raymond participated, except those with his teacher, was institutionalized, *i.e.*, governed by prescribed rules. They were intimate, free contacts in which Raymond had to make his own adjustment.

We doubt that the people of Midwest differ from the people of Yankee City in their motives and intentions. But there are forces at work in Midwest making for more interclass understanding and tolerance and for greater breadth of social experience than occurs in Yankee City. Some of these forces are known.

First, the differences between classes are not so great that a common ground for communication and mutual appreciation is lacking. The Upper Upper families of Yankee City are separated from their fellow citizens

of the Lower Lower class by a vast chasm of differences in habits, values and living conditions. There is a limited basis for understanding. The top and bottom classes of Yankee City are foreign to each other. This is not true of Midwest. No one in Midwest is surprised, astonished, appalled, disgusted or fascinated by the way of life of the other classes. There is basic agreement on what are the right things to do. Class differences in Midwest are differences in emphasis. Class I and Class III men play pool and drink beer in Gwynn's Tavern; but more Class III men do this, and they do it more frequently. Class I and Class III men attend the same Sunday School classes and church services; but Class III men are more faithful to Sunday School and Class I men more faithful to church.

Secondly, there are no general prohibitions or taboos on interrelations between classes. Indeed there is general acceptance of an official ideology that there should be no class distinctions. The resistances to interclass associations that are present, such as resistance to interclass clique formation and marriage, occur in opposition to the official dogma. Furthermore, there are no rules governing interclass relations; a new *modus vivendi* must be contrived for each interclass contact.

Third, the geography and economy of Midwest require a great amount of interaction between classes. Seven hundred people scattered over 300 acres of land, almost at random so far as social class is concerned, cannot avoid interclass contacts. There are no class-segregated living areas in Midwest. The commercial activities of Midwest involve little separation of personnel according to social class lines. The owner or manager of a small business works in class conjunction with his employees; most of the time he does the same sort of things they do. He has no private office to isolate him from his helpers, and there are few fellow executives with whom he can associate. In the evening he attends the same meetings and entertainments as his employees. In large communities where there are great numbers in each class, who often live in segregated districts, an individual can

easily become lost in his own class and lead a narrow, provincial life. In a small town like Midwest, on the other hand, life cannot be so completely class bound or made sterile by formalities.

Fourth, the small population makes it impossible for Midwest to be very selective in the distribution of functions and privileges. If the Class I citizens of Midwest should desire to be exclusive, there is little they could do. The financial burden of supporting a country club, for example, would be prohibitive. But more important than this, there are not within any one class sufficient human resources to do important things. To carry on the functions of the town, to have a Boy Scout troop, to present an entertainment, to organize a Chamber of Commerce or a Parent-Teachers Association, wide participation from all classes is required. The members of a single social class in Midwest can converse and play cards; this is about the limit of classbound behavior.

These four factors, relatively small class differences in values and living conditions, absence of taboos on interclass contacts, lack of geographical and sociological class segregation and the small population make for frequent contact and communication between individuals of different classes. There occurs as a consequence an important paradox: In this small community, which is relatively undifferentiated along social class lines, the life pattern of the individual is relatively highly differentiated with respect to sharing in and appreciation for the values and activities of different classes. The frequently renewed, close, direct, non-institutionalized contacts with people of classes other than one's own make this outcome inevitable. Because of these contacts, the individual is relatively cosmopolitan where social class is concerned; he does not feel strange and out of place when he enters the homes or attends the meetings of people who belong to other social classes of the community. And he becomes relatively tolerant because he has to live in daily intimate contact with fellow townspeople of different classes.

## 24 • Similarities and Differences in Class Structure

We have noted that the research on class structure represented in this chapter consists of a series of local community studies. To what extent can the results of this type of research be regarded as applicable to other communities across the nation? Because almost all of the studies have been made in rural areas or in small and medium-sized towns, it is exceedingly doubtful how far, if at all, the findings can be extended to the larger cities. But the research has been so extensive and varied that some fairly dependable generalizations can be drawn about American communities outside the large metropolitan areas.

The two excerpts comprising this selection indicate some of the more important of these generalizations. The first, from W. Lloyd Warner's *American Life: Dream and Reality*, points to the basic similarities in class structure across the nation. The second, by Warner, Robert Havighurst, and Martin Loeb, in addition to underlining the local variations, summarizes much of the knowledge we possess about class in the larger cities.

### Basic Similarities in Class Structure

The class systems of the communities in the several regions of the United States are basically similar. A good test of this statement is that people who move from one region to another recognize their own and other levels in the new community and know how to adjust themselves. But variations are present, for example, in number of class levels, size of the population of each level, and differences in the culture and social composition of the various strata. Furthermore, the amount and kind of social mobility permitted between two or more levels and the strength of the class system itself differ regionally. In general, the older and more stable regions of the East and South have more highly organized class systems than the West.

On the eastern seaboard of New England there are six recognizable class levels. The upper class is divided into a new and old

aristocracy. The so-called "old-family" level at the top provides the keystone to the status arch. Immediately beneath it are the people called the "new families," who are new to the status rather than to the community. They are the fortunate mobile people who have climbed to a level where they participate with the top group in their clubs and cliques. These lower-upper-class people recognize that they are below those born to high position with lineages of several generations. The old families hold their position by virtue of inheritance, validated by the possession of a recognized social lineage; the new families, by competition with others and by translating their material successes into acceptance by their social betters. On the average, the new families, socially inferior to the old ones, have more money, better houses, more expensive automobiles, and other material

[From W. Lloyd Warner, *American Life: Dream and Reality*, copyright 1953, pp. 55-60.  
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goods that are superior in dollars and cents to those of their social superiors. But if the success of the new families is due to wealth, their money is felt to be too new; if due to occupational triumph, their achievement is too recent; if the source of their new social power is educational attainment, what they have learned, while highly valued, is too newly learned and insufficient. The inherited culture of an upper class, firmly supplemented by higher education in the proper preparatory schools and superior universities and colleges, is more highly regarded.

The hard core of the upper-middle class, the level below the top two, consists of the solid citizens who are the active civic leaders of the community. They are thought of as the "joiners," for they belong to the associations which are better known to the public and are given more respectful attention by the public press. The upper-middle class feels itself to be, and in fact is, above the Level of the Common Man just beneath it. Its members are acutely aware of being socially inferior to the upper classes. To the upper-middle families that are not anxious to move up socially, this problem is not particularly distressing; but, to those that are socially mobile, the presence of an upper class sufficiently open to make it possible for some of their level to climb into it is a source of continuing frustration or anxious anticipation. Combined, the two upper levels and the upper-middle, comprising about 15-25 percent of the people of most communities in America, are what might be called the "Level above the Common Man." The upper two classes alone rarely comprise more than 5 percent of the total population of a city.

The lower-middle class, the top of the Common Man Level, is composed economically of small businessmen, a few highly skilled workmen, and a large number of clerks and other workers in similar categories. Members of this class tend to be extremely proper and conservative. They are joiners, belonging to patriotic organizations, fraternal orders, secret societies and auxiliaries, or other associations based on family membership. They live in the regions of the little

houses, with the well-kept but cramped gardens and lawns, on the side streets rather than the better residential ones. The upper-middle class tends to live on the broad residential streets, in the better houses with the larger gardens. Upper-middle-class dwelling areas in the smaller communities are sometimes indistinguishable from those of the class above them.

The men and women of the lower-middle class tend to approach the ideal typical of the Protestant ethic, being careful with their money, saving, farsighted, forever anxious about what their neighbors think, and continually concerned about respectability.

The people in the upper-lower class are the semiskilled workers, the small tradesmen, and often the less skilled employees of service enterprises. They, too, are highly respectable, limited in their outlook on the world around them, and are thought of as "honest workmen."

The people of the lowest level, the lower-lower class, by social reputation are not respectable or are the pitied unfortunates. Sometimes they are the new "greenhorns," the recently arrived "ethnic" peoples. These new people throughout American history, with their diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, have migrated here and settled. Starting at the bottom, they begin their slow ascent in our status system. They differ culturally rather than racially from the dominant group in America. Lower-lower-class people live on the river-banks, in the foggy bottoms, in the regions back of the tanneries or near the stockyards, and generally in those places that are not desired by anyone else. Their reputation is such that they are believed to lack the cardinal virtues in which Americans pride themselves. Although in standards of sexual behavior many differ from the classes above, others are different only because they are less ambitious and have little desire to fulfil the middle-class goal of "getting ahead." Their reputation for immorality often is no more than the projected fantasy of those above them; as such they become a collective symbol of the community's unconscious!

The lower-lower level is not the largest in the community, having but 25 percent as compared with the upper-lower, the largest class, with 33 percent, and the lower-middle, with 28 percent. . . . Other communities and cities throughout America show similar distributions. The study of Jonesville in the Middle West reveals that 3 percent is upper class, 11 percent upper-middle, 31 percent lower-middle, 41 percent upper-lower, and 14 percent lower-lower.

A study recently completed in the state of Georgia in the Deep South gave a somewhat different distribution of the populations of the several classes. Here the two upper classes had 4.2 percent of the total, the upper-middle 22 percent, the lower-middle 35 percent, the upper-lower 28 percent, and the lower-lower 10 percent.

The class differences among the communities of the several regions are significant and need comment. The newer regions of America, because of rapid social change and their comparative recency, tend not to develop a superior old-family class. This is true of many of the communities throughout the prairie states of the Middle West. An old-family group may be present in the community and feel some claim to superior recognition, but ordinarily communities in new regions look upon them as no more than the equals of the new-family group. It will take several more generations to validate their claims to a rank above the more recently arrived.

The lower-lower group is smaller in the Middle Western towns and Far West because there are fewer recently arrived ethnic peoples and the towns are too new to produce a

so-called "worthless" class; furthermore, they are market centers for large agricultural areas, making it less likely that economic forces will help to produce an industrial proletariat.

The lowest white group in parts of the South is smaller and the higher classes larger than elsewhere in America because there is a large rural Negro peasant group on which much of the market economy of the town is founded.

\* \* \*

Actually, each class merges into the class above and the one below it. A class system where there is movement up and down by individuals and families in an open social system where there is territorial as well as social movement necessarily makes no sharp distinctions between one class and contiguous ones. The reader should not suppose that all individuals are alike in a particular class, any more than he should assume that all men in our society who occupy the status *father* are alike either as men or as fathers. They do share common characteristics, but clearly diversity and heterogeneity must exist in a society when social change is rapid and individualism is stressed. But, in our recognition of the differences among men, we should not overlook the many similarities which permit the scientist to establish modal types. Despite the variations, the core of the status structure of America, as it has been studied in various communities throughout the United States, remains remarkably the same. Although there are regional and cultural differences, the basic arrangement of the social classes and the kinds of people in them show far greater similarities than differences.

### Differences in Class Structure

The question must have arisen in the reader's mind about how general this system of ranking, found in the above communities, is

throughout the United States. Is it to be found in the Far West with all of its emphasis on one man being as good as the next?

[From W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated?* Harper and Bros., 1944, pp. 29-32. Used by permission.]

Is it true for all parts of the South and the new parts as well as the old? Is it in large metropolitan as well as rural areas? And if it is elsewhere in the United States, what are the comparative rankings among classes who occupy the same relative positions? Would an upper-middle-class Midwesterner rank equally well in Deep South and Yankee City? It is with these questions that we will now be concerned.

The size of the community, the region in which it is located, the rapidity of growth, the type of growth, and the degree to which its older traditions have held are potent factors in the strength and power of the American class order. Let us see how each contributes to this type of system found in the several communities of this country. We will first examine the question of size. All large American cities have their social registers and Blue Books which separate the "people who count" from all the rest. All of them have their areas which are "the wrong side of the tracks" and others believed to be "the better districts." This much is clear with no further inquiry. The novelists contribute further evidence. Several modern novelists have described part of the class system of Philadelphia with its top "Main Line" and the several strata below it. We remember how in *Kitty Foyle* Kitty did not marry the man she loved because the social distance between them was too great and could never be bridged. Boston's Brahmins and the other higher classes have been carefully analyzed in such novels as John Marquand's *The Late George Apley*, H. M. Pulham, *Esquire*, and in William Dean Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham*.

Similar indications of class differences in cities in other parts of the United States could be given. A more careful scrutiny of the material, however, indicates that there are decided differences in the class system found in smaller cities and towns. The inhabitants of the smaller places view their community as a whole. An individual knows or "someone he knows" knows everyone in town. A man's background cannot long remain unknown, and almost everyone is socially placed. This is much less true in the great metropolitan

areas. Here a family can move from one section to another and establish new social connections without everyone's knowing that they have raised their social status. On the other hand, social contacts are less easily made for the same reason and consequently the problem of raising the family's status is increased because it frequently is impossible to make the proper connections with the people above them.

A large city is much more developed and has a greater variety of people in it than a small one; the social differences are much greater and it seems likely that the lower-class people are further removed from those at the top than the same social level is in a small town. The different class levels tend to associate more with their own kind, but the interconnections of the several layers are not so clearly marked as in the small city where everyone's knowledge about everyone else tends to place people socially and restrict the possible range of their class participation.

A town or city which has been recently established and had a rapid growth in population has not had the time to establish a stable social system. The state of flux prevents the formation of a definite class order. An upper-upper class built on the foundation of lineage is impossible. Consequently a lower-upper class founded on new wealth striving for old family recognition and prestige is impossible. An upper-middle class and a lower-middle class may develop, but no clear demarcation is likely between them, just as it is unlikely that there will be one between the lower-upper and the upper-middle. The keystone of the stable class structure that is firm and resistant to destructive forces is a strong, old family society at the top. Therefore, very new cities and towns, old towns with recent growths which have inundated the original population and broken its social system, and old communities which by growth have changed their ethnic composition are communities which have a more open and fluid system of power and prestige.

A brief survey of a few of the cities and towns in two regions of the West will illustrate this point. On the West Coast, San



Francisco and Los Angeles are highly contrasted. Los Angeles has had the most rapid development of any of the great cities of the United States. It has grown from a town of 6,000 in 1870 to a community of several million. Most of this growth has occurred in the last twenty years. The original social system and its carriers have been destroyed. The rapid technological, economic, and social changes combined with the conflicting cultural background of people from the South, Midwest, and Far West have kept the status system in flux. The older Spanish-American status hierarchy clings to its distinctions. The early Anglo-American population has largely lost its social traditions and the new unstable Hollywood society with its so-called "caste distinctions" bears a closer resemblance to the occupational hierarchy of a factory than to a class order. All the elements of class are present except social stability and maturity.

In contrast, San Francisco is a more settled and stable community. It has grown more slowly and its population and social shifts have occurred within the social framework early established. The upper classes are more clearly demarked. This is less true for the metropolitan Bay District which surrounds the city itself.

The California large towns and smaller cities conform to the same rules found in the two large cities. Small stable communities tend to have more marked status distinctions. The small towns which service a large rural area which have had late industrial development maintain a status hierarchy that is easily observed. The new industrial communities do not.

There are even more marked differences between old and new communities in the East and South, since these areas have had time to develop more closely integrated social systems. On the whole, the small cities and large towns of the Deep South and New Eng-

land have a more clearly defined class order than those in the Midwest and Far West. Their old families tend to be more respected than those from the other areas of the United States. A Chicago upper-class family, recognized as at the very top in this area, is felt to have made a good marriage for one of its sons or daughters if the young person marries into an upper-class Bostonian family. The prestige of Harvard for the "sons of successful men" in the other areas of the United States is founded not on its scholarly worth alone but upon the solid strength of the aristocratic Boston and New England families who attend it. The club system for the young men in the university reflects the class system of their elders. There are not many wealthy New York families whose sons have sufficient social prestige to be acceptable to such organizations. There are still fewer eligibles from other parts of the United States. The "newly rich" and the "socially prominent" of Chicago, Kansas City, and Detroit who go south and east to buy old mansions and estates recognize the superiority of the eastern and southern class system and try to play the hardest social game where the rewards are higher and more stimulating to the daring.

The rural areas of the United States, composed of working farmers, seldom make clear distinctions of rank between the social levels. Today, with easy transportation available, the people in rural areas tend to be dependent upon the larger communities around them for their social distinctions and to fit into such a pattern.

In brief, the small cities in the oldest regions with the least social change in their histories tend to have the most clearly developed class orders; the youngest areas with the greatest social change have the least clearly developed social classes but the chances of social mobility are greater.

## 25 • The Effects of Class Structure on Personality

Diverse life styles are the major distinguishing characteristics of the several social classes. And it is precisely these different patterns of belief, attitudes, and behavior that give the class structure its primary educational significance. Since each of the classes has a somewhat different way of life, each tends to develop a somewhat different character and personality in its members. Hence, some understanding of these class patterns is important to every teacher.

The two excerpts that make up this selection should contribute to such an understanding. Although both these passages are concerned with life styles, there are some differences which should be noted. First, the first excerpt discusses all six class divisions, whereas the second confines itself to the middle and lower classes as wholes. Secondly, the first excerpt describes class ideologies, whereas the second is concerned primarily with class conditions and goals. Finally, the first excerpt is part of a local community study, whereas the second is a summary statement based upon many studies in various parts of the country. It may be added, however, that the class ideologies depicted in *Deep South*, from which the first excerpt was taken, are typical of those found in *Yankee City*, *Elmtown*, and other studies of this type.

Allison Davis is a distinguished sociologist, educator, and psychologist who will be quoted again in Chapter 7. Burleigh B. Gardner and Mary R. Gardner are scholars associated with the Warner school. Clyde Kluckhohn, one of the leading anthropologists in the United States, has been particularly interested in the study of contemporary American culture. Mrs. Kluckhohn, also an anthropologist, has been associated with her husband in much of his work.

### Class Mentalities in the Deep South

#### THE UPPER-CLASS CONFIGURATION

##### *The Idealization of the Past*

The ideology of the upper class . . . is colored particularly by the concept of time. Stability in time is of supreme value to members of this class, and they conceive of the class structure as having its basis in lineage, in the stability of a family's social position. An indi-

vidual is thought to have a certain class position because his family has always occupied that position. This emphasis on the past may be seen, furthermore, in almost all aspects of upper-class behavior. They display little interest in the community, today, except where particular activities reflect the past.

Although upper-class people today enjoy a certain amount of economic security, they are not all "wealthy" individuals, nor are they

[From Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South*, 1941, pp. 73-83. Used by permission of the University of Chicago Press.]

the most affluent group in the society. Most members of the upper-upper class, however, have been wealthy in the past, or at least their families have been. Their families, a generation or two ago, were a group whose economic position and standard of consumption far surpassed that of the rest of the community. Mostly large planters, owners of great tracts of land and of many slaves, they lived extravagantly, spent money freely, and entertained elaborately; and upper uppers, today, in spite of their diminished resources, try to preserve, as far as possible, this old pattern of behavior which their families established during a past period of opulence. Houses and furnishings reflect their erstwhile riches, and this particular reflection of the past is highly valued by them. Whenever it has been economically possible, the members of the "old aristocracy" have retained their plantation homes; and they take great pride in keeping them intact—just as they were in "the old days." Newly acquired furnishings are generally old, preferably "antebellum" rather than new and modern. In fact, one proof of their superordinate position is that members of the lower-upper class whose lineage would not, in itself, engender such reverence for the past, tend to pattern their behavior after that of the upper-upper class and to cultivate an appreciation for time, as a part of the process of seeking mobility into the upper-upper group.

#### *Lack of Interest in the Community*

As a group, members of the upper class seldom participate actively in contemporary community organizations or activities. There is almost no political activity among them, or even any pronounced effort to observe with care the laws of the community. Their regular attendance at church is apparently just a part of the ritual of upper-class behavior and does not signify any interest in theology or religious teachings. Their associational activity is limited almost entirely to participation in the Historical Club, the primary function of which is preservation and honoring of the past. Most of their informal social participa-

tion is in small groups whose memberships, especially in the older age ranges, often include upper-class persons exclusively.

#### *Primacy of Lineage*

It is apparent from this brief summary of the upper-class configuration of attitudes and behavior that their concept of time, their value of the past, is a very important element in their ideology and one which has a very definite relation to specific behavior. Closely linked to this time concept, and an integral part of it, is the upper-class preoccupation with lineage. It may be said that an upper-class person is primarily a member of a group and is only secondarily an individual. He is a member of a kinship group and, as such, a bona fide member of his class. Variations in his individual behavior have little effect upon his membership or position in either his family or his class. Because of the high value placed on lineage, he maintains his position no matter what his individual pattern of behavior may be. Social control, pressure by the group to maintain uniform patterns of individual behavior among its members, is, therefore, at a minimum in the upper class. An individual is a member of the upper class because of the past—his family's past—and not because of what he has or what he does.

### THE MIDDLE-CLASS CONFIGURATION

#### *Importance of Wealth and Morality*

The middle class, on the other hand, may be looked upon as a group in which special value is placed upon individual wealth and upon the observance of religious and moral precepts in individual behavior. Middle-class ideology is colored not by the past behavior of the individual's forebears but by his own present behavior, especially as that behavior reflects economic status and moral and religious attitudes. Not only the number of possessions, but their cash value also, is of significance to this group. It is here, especially in the upper-middle class, that "appearances"

are particularly important. Both of the middle-class groups, while interpreting the class structure of the society primarily in terms of contemporary wealth, at the same time concede that the superiority of the upper class has its basis in past affluence. Also embodied in their interpretation of the society's stratification is a preoccupation with religious teachings, a concern with moral concepts of "right and wrong" "good and evil." These concepts, then—the high value of contemporary individual wealth and "moral" behavior—profoundly influence middle-class behavior.

In general, the configurations of upper-middle and lower-middle class are sufficiently similar so that they may be discussed together. Differences between them in regard to any one characteristic of behavior are generally differences in degree, so that upper middles are usually superordinate to lower middles only in a specific type of behavior or in a specific type of relation. Economic security is enjoyed to some extent by both groups but is achieved to a much higher degree in the upper-middle class, although lower-middle-class persons generally have a certainty of sufficient income to meet their physical needs. Members of the upper-middle class, however, on the whole, control more wealth, receive higher incomes, and are in occupations which have more prestige, thus giving them a security beyond the mere ability to care for fundamental physical needs. Upper-middle-class men are most frequently found in independent or supervisory occupations, as professional men or as employers and owners or managers of large businesses. Lower-middle-class men are much more often employees or the owners of small enterprises. The greatest wealth in the society today is centered in the upper-middle class, and it is in this group that the greatest emphasis on the display of wealth is found. Fine clothes, new cars, well-kept homes, and expensive furnishings are the rule. In neither middle-class group, however, do possessions suggest the time values of the upper class. Rather, there is an emphasis on modern styles and values, with concern for "quality" among up-

per middles and for "quantity" in the lower-middle group.

The informal social participation of the middle class is often characterized by organization into card clubs, a type of association not often found among the upper class and entirely absent from the lower-class configuration. Behavior in these informal groups is usually more restrained and more limited to a specific recreational activity than among the upper class, whose recreational behavior is condemned by the middle group as "indecent" and "immoral." Middle-class people refer to their own members as "good clean people," emphasize the fact that they "don't drink," often mention that their "women don't smoke," and are particularly vehement in stating that their married couples don't "carry-on" with one another's mates in the manner of the upper class.

#### *"Self-improvement"*

In the middle class, furthermore, it is also important to "improve one's self," an attitude which has special significance for those individuals who are aware of the possibilities of social mobility. Every middle-class parent who is financially able attempts to educate his children beyond secondary school, at least to some extent. Specialized study, talent achievement, and organizations around talent, such as music and study clubs, flourish on this social level. It is primarily the mobile middle-class individuals who want to "improve" themselves through study clubs and exercise of talent, although even the more stable members of the middle class attach considerable importance to self-improvement as a means of maintaining status (usually defended as a means of achieving a "better" community through "better" individuals).

#### *"Community Improvement"*

Community activities and organizations are the great participation field of this class. Both middle-class groups are active politically (the upper middles usually occupying the superordinate positions), and both groups feel it their "duty" to take an interest in this

particular function of the community. Laws are taken much more seriously by them than by the upper class. Very active in churches and church associations, middle-class people are not content merely to participate but tend to concern themselves with discussions of theology and with a strict observance of religious teachings.

It is this group which supplies the majority of the members in formal associations, the upper middles usually occupying the positions of authority in them. A large proportion of these associations—men's and women's organizations alike,—profess to function in the interests of the community as a whole and concern themselves with various types of civic improvement, such as, promoting "better" business relations, "better" schools, and more "beautiful" public parks, streets, etc. Emphasis is pre-eminently on the community of today, and almost no middle-class associations are primarily interested in the past, the chief pre-occupation of the upper-class Historical Club. In all their organized activity there is a moral note. It is one's "duty" as a member of the community to function actively in the Rotary Club, the Woman's Club, the Parent-Teacher Association, or in some associations concerned with "bettering" present conditions.

### *Social Conformity*

The importance of wealth and "moral" behavior is stressed with emphasis upon the individual and his expression of these values. In the middle class, a person's position is directly dependent upon his pattern of behavior, especially his appearance of wealth and his moral attitudes. His social status is not an inherent quality, as is that of an upper-class individual, but is dependent entirely upon his actions. He retains his position in the group only so long as his behavior conforms to the rules which the middle class has established. It appears, therefore, that behavior in this class is highly organized and closely controlled; and, much more than in any other group in the society, the members of this group complacently accept and abide by the "rules." The high development of associa-

tional behavior is the one outstanding expression of these controls, and the whole associational structure reflects the moral concepts of the middle class.

The middle class may, then, be interpreted as a group in which a high degree of organization and moral rules act to limit the amount and effects of individual variation. In other words, in a class where membership may be directly influenced by variations in individual patterns of behavior, the many rules and the extreme group pressure for enforcement may be seen as a technique for limiting individual variations and so strengthening class solidarity through enforced uniformity. Similarly, the large amount of organized activity in the middle class—in churches, associations, politics, etc.—is a means of controlling and limiting the disruptive effects of middle-class individualism.

## THE LOWER-CLASS CONFIGURATION

### *Lack of Integration into the Community*

In contrast to the upper class, the lower class is a relatively new group in the community. This is not to infer that the presence of some type of lower class is new but, rather, that it has only recently become a significantly large group and is composed of a type of people relatively new to the community. Now comprising about a third of all the white population, the lower class is composed mainly of mill and factory workers who have come into the community during the last thirty years. They are primarily an industrial group, a new occupational grouping in the society, and one which, as we have already pointed out, is generally ignored by the higher social classes.

The lower class in Old City does not take part in the formal associational activity found in the middle class. There are few associations and formal groups among them. They take no part in the organizations and group activities of the other classes or of the community as a whole, and seem but slightly

interested. They participate but little in community politics except as voters; and the lower lowers, especially, have a conscious, thorough disregard for the laws of the community. Crimes of violence, public drunkenness, disturbing the peace, are frequent offenses among them. Lower-class people, too, generally have little church participation, although upper lowers do attend church services occasionally. By and large, lower-class behavior and ideology may be said to be characterized by a disdain for all the values of the higher classes, a disdain for the government and laws which they see as creations of the upper class and middle class, a disdain for churches and associations and for the moral and religious values. This contempt for all the mores and institutions of the upper classes, especially for those of the middle class, reaches a much higher intensity in the lower-lower group than among upper lowers. The latter group is more aware of the social position of the middle class, feels less socially distant from its members, and, in many cases, sees the possibility of mobility into this class.

### *Economic Insecurity*

Lower-class people generally do not have a high degree of economic security. Usually employees, working for wages by the hour or by the day, they have little certainty of sufficient income over any period of time to care for their physical needs. This insecurity is reflected in the number and type of their possessions and in their attitude toward them. One lower-lower-class family, for example, exhibited as its most prized possession a colored paper poster advertising some commercial product. One adult member of the family had found it in the city dump and had brought it home as a gift for his younger brother. There is a great deal of installment-plan buying, and emphasis is entirely upon quantity without regard for quality. While upper-lower-class people take some interest in caring for such possessions as they have, lower-lower-class individuals are quite consistently improvident. They have little consideration for their future welfare; and they

find it impossible to provide for the future, since immediate needs are so rarely satisfied.

### *Primacy of the Job*

The meaningful solidarities among the lower classes are neither those of association nor those of church, but rather those of occupation and neighborhood. Roughly, these "new people" divide themselves into three groups on the basis of their industrial affiliation: that is, workers in cotton mills, sawmills and planing mills. Members of each of these segments of the lower class have a certain amount of solidarity through their occupational relations and consider themselves somewhat different from members of the other occupational groups. This differentiation among themselves has some basis, too, in the backgrounds of the various groups, for cotton-mill workers (who, in actual fact, have had no common bond of employment, since the cotton mills closed some ten years earlier) came to the community mostly from other industrial cities in the eastern part of the state; planing-mill workers and many sawmill workers, on the other hand, are largely people of farming background—tenant-farmers and small farmers—and farm laborers from the surrounding territory. In addition to these industrial people who form the bulk of the lower class today, there are also some fishermen, artisans, and small shopkeepers. There are also a few tenant-farmers and small farm-owners who do not actually have a "place" in the urban society but who may have extensive urban contacts. Members of these latter urban occupational groups do not have occupational solidarities among themselves, as the industrial groups do. They do, however, have membership in other lower-class groupings based on the locality in which they live.

### *Importance of Residential Areas*

Superimposed upon the industrial grouping in the lower class, and closely related to them, are distinctions made on the basis of specific localities in which individuals live. These localities are larger than neighborhoods, as that term is generally applied; and

residents do not necessarily have the complex of one-to-one, face-to-face relations with one another which constitute the conventional neighborhood relation. There is, however, a certain solidarity among residents of the same district, a distinction between themselves and members of their class who live in other parts of town. Thus, Dunlap Street, on the "east side of town" near the planing mill, and the side streets and alleys running into it, constitute a locality whose residents have a sense of solidarity. Inhabited mainly by planing-mill workers, this district's solidarity embraces some residents who are not employed by that factory. Similarly, Crowder Street, inhabited largely by people who once worked in the cotton mills, is not limited to them entirely. A third, quite well-defined locality is that which includes factory workers and fishermen who, together, have a certain amount of solidarity because of common residence in this district. Sawmill workers generally live outside the urban area.

Not only does the lower class make distinctions and form groups on the basis of these industrial differences and locality differences, but there is also a definite ranking of residential areas.

This reflects a significant difference, for Crowder Street residents, and perhaps the bulk of cotton-mill workers in the community, have a general pattern of behavior somewhat different from the other lower-class population, a pattern which is upper-lower rather than that of the lower-lower-class people on Dunlap Street and the river front. The upper-lower-class people have a little church of their own, somewhat better housing, an interest in caring for their real and personal property, and a more complex code of ethics. Even within the lower-lower class there are distinctions in rank. Dunlap Street ranks higher than the river front; planing-mill workers are considered definitely above fishermen and houseboat dwellers. One woman, whose several husbands had been variously

employed in several different industries and who had lived in almost every lower-class locality in Old City, felt that she had really reached the lowest rank when her husband moved her into a houseboat on the river front.

I ain't never had to live like this and I ain't never going to do it for no man. I seen some mighty hard times, but I ain't never see nothing like this. He's just been trying to pull me down lower and lower ever since I took up with him. I'm down low enough, and I ain't going to have him nor no man pulling me down lower. . . . I told him just how it was, and I says to him, I says:

"I'd just as leave get out and scratch dirt with the chickens as live here like this with you!" And I would, too. . . . I ain't never had to live like this. I just ain't going to put up with it. No, Honey, I ain't never had to live here before. I never did like it none down here. I seen some mighty hard times, but I always was able to get me a house up in the town.

## SUMMARY

The inhabitants of Old City recognize the reality of class division within the society and, from their varied positions in the social structure, evaluate the class system from different perspectives. A synthesis of these perspectives and a study of overt behavior reveal three well-defined classes and three subclasses. The classes may be characterized by general patterns of behavior. The past is of prime importance to the upper class. Wealth and "morality" mark the aspirations of the middle class, as well as concern with making themselves and the community "better." Poverty, lack of formal organization, and isolation from the other classes distinguish the lower class, and the "job" and area of residence serve to differentiate segments within it.

## Class Conditions and Class Goals

Whether the six-class system of Warner and his collaborators is generally valid or whether a large or smaller subdivision represents the facts in at least some communities, is an empirical question which cannot be answered until there have been more studies and studies by investigators not committed to any particular theory. For some purposes our grouping is undoubtedly too coarse. Corey, for example, has shown how divergent are the occupations, economic composition, and interests of the upper and lower middle classes. However, the goal structures of the total middle class appear to have much in common as contrasted with the goal structures of the total lower class.

### I. Analysis of the middle class

#### A. Conditions which hold in general:

1. Majority of families enjoy relative economic security.
2. Majority of families have some recognition in the wider community and members belong to organizations which receive public notice. (Many more associations are open to middle-class than to lower-class people, and middle-class associations accord with the generalized orientations in ways that lower-class organizations—*e.g.*, *gangs*—do not. Often lower-class members enter organizations in settlement houses, etc., that the middle class consider middle-class charities and which hence do not have much prestige in the community as a whole.)
3. Schools and community organizations have goals which accord with those of the middle-class family. (The goals accord in general char-

acter but there are often differences between generations.)

#### B. Specific goals

1. Relating to the acquisition of property
  - a. Great stress is put on permanency of property<sup>1</sup> and a piling up of capital goods. In part this is "family property" so long as the family remains a unit, but in part it is made up of "individual" possessions.
  - b. Thrift and hard work are emphasized: "work for work's sake."
  - c. Respect for both property and ownership is important.
2. Relating to "good" standing in the community: conformity with standards is important.
  - a. Strict sex taboos are required.
  - b. Cleanliness is stressed.
  - c. Emotional control, especially adequate control of aggression, is stressed.
  - d. The individual is expected to be a "good fellow" who is successful in a "respectable" and established job, but who is not outstandingly different.<sup>2</sup>
  - e. "Good" manners of a conventional type are important.

<sup>1</sup> Note that this is goal rather than behavioral fact. Corey showed in 1935 that the livelihood of only 12 percent of the American population in that year was mainly involved with property ownership, whereas in 1835 the corresponding figure was 80 percent.

<sup>2</sup> Comment: Movie figures with any amount of idiosyncrasies are apt to be either comic or villainous.

[From Clyde Kluckhohn and Florence R. Kluckhohn, "American Culture: Generalized Orientations and Class Patterns," in Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. MacIver (eds.), *Conflicts of Power in Modern Culture*, Harper and Bros., 1947, pp. 121-123, 125-126.

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- f. Affiliation with the proper companies and organizations is expected.
  - g. A respect for law and order is inculcated.
  - h. "Good works" are stressed. However, "charity" is often taught in such a way that the child's sense of class distinction is strengthened.
3. Individual autonomy is emphasized.
  4. A good education—specifically related to success—is a goal to strive for.
  5. A "good" marriage is important; ideally there is no divorce.
  6. Relating to family solidarity:
    - a. The middle-class family is ideally an isolated conjugal unit made up of the father, mother, and children. The relatives usually do not live with the family and relatives who are considered "undesirable" are disregarded. The widowed tend to be under duress.
    - b. There is a segregation of the spheres of dominance of the father and mother. The father is the economic head of the family. The mother and children are usually ignorant of financial matters. The mother is the director of home activities, social life, and the main disciplinarian of the children, except in very serious matters, which are referred to the father. The mother ideally remains in the home and devotes much of her time to furthering the social contacts of her children and husband.
    - c. The family is "child-centered" partly because children are the hope of improved family status.
  7. Relating to recreation:
    - a. Participation in various individualistic and organized sports is considered desirable.
    - b. Travel is a frequent way of spending vacations.
    - c. Various forms of commercial entertainment are an important form of recreation. . . .
- II. Analysis of the lower class
- A. Conditions which hold in general:
    1. Majority of families are harassed by economic insecurity.
    2. Majority of families have some status in the neighborhood in which they live, but this neighborhood often receives no recognition from the wider community.
    3. The members of the family belong to few specifically lower-class organizations outside of church groups and trade unions. School teachers (usually of middle class) tend to discriminate against lower-class children. As has been remarked, "Teachers react to lower-class children as if they had been taught middle-class standards, understood them, and willfully rejected them."
  - B. Specific goals
    1. Relating to acquisition of property (money and material possessions):
      - a. Keeping the family fed, clothed, and housed is of vital importance.
      - b. Immediate spending of material goods and money tends to be a subgoal in itself.
    2. Relating to "good" standing in the neighborhood:
      - a. The individual is expected to be a "good fellow" in the gang.
      - b. Prowess in aggressive techniques brings prestige.
      - c. Prowess in sexual sphere is encouraged.
      - d. Opportunism is a characteristic attitude toward law and order.
      - e. Cleanliness is less stressed, partly because the mother often works as well as manages a household. This relative lack of cleanliness brings negative responses from middle-class people.
    3. Relating to education: Ideally there is a vague notion that education will help the individual to improve his

status. Some stress is put on literacy but the person who is "too educated" is a misfit in the community.

4. Relating to family solidarity: (These are the general patterns; there are variations between ethnic groups especially in the first generation.)

- a. Family solidarity tends to be along the extended family line, usually the maternal. Members of extended family groups aid each other and all relatives are recognized. The emphasis on the independence of the conjugal unit is not so great as in the middle class.
- b. Maternal dominance often exists

in the economic sphere because, for one reason or another, the father is unable to support the family. The mother frequently works as well as the father. The mother and children are aware of the financial situation. Frequently the family consists of the mother and children.

- c. The home is not "child-centered," and the mother does not supervise the activities of the children closely.
5. Relating to recreation: Indulging in gambling and commercial entertainment is permitted at an early age.

## SECTION B

# CASTE AND ETHNIC GROUPS

## 26 • *The Basic Sociology of Caste*

In almost every part of the world, racial and ethnic divisions pose a difficult and frequently a bitter social problem. This is particularly true in the United States, where, as MacIver and Page indicate, one third of the total population "is set aside by attitudes and sentiments often approximating those of caste." For us, this is not simply a gigantic domestic issue but—since our racial and ethnic discrimination is one of our greatest liabilities in the eyes of the people of Asia, Africa, and South America—a major problem in foreign policy as well. It is an issue, moreover, which in one way or another finds its way into almost every school in the nation—often very directly in school policy and activities. But if ethnic-group divisions were not a grave social issue, they would still deserve the attention of the teacher. For ethnic differences, like class differences, help to shape the personality and character of the pupils.

As in the case of social classes, we may well begin our study of ethnic group distinctions with a broad historical and social perspective. For this perspective we have again drawn on the work of R. M. MacIver and Charles H. Page.

In almost every large region of the earth we witness man's efforts to compose, to change, or to destroy ethnic divisions.

\* \* \*

This problem has a particular significance and a particular interest in the United States, where vast immigrations and the process of assimilation have been conspicuous features of the community life. No other large modern nation has been as successful in bringing together peoples of different tongues and faiths and different backgrounds and in creating an effective national amalgamation, based upon commonly shared principles of social equality and individual opportunity. Yet today, standing in stark contrast with these principles, at least a third of the total American population is set apart by attitudes and sentiments often approximating those of caste. Closest to this status are the some thirteen million Negroes, some two million Mexicans and other Latin Americans, perhaps four hundred thousand American Indians, and the somewhat smaller groups of Orientals, mainly Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino. Less socially isolated, but separated by a deep fissure line of a special type, are the some five million Jews—we have here no exact figures. Further barriers detach a considerable number of ethnic groups, including about five million Italians, and smaller groups of Slavs, Poles, Czechs, Slovenes, Hungarians and other Eastern Europeans, totaling about sixteen million persons. If we add all of the individuals in such organizations as the Roman Catholic Church and the Holiness religious sects, whose members in certain regions are likely to sense that they are not fully admitted to the community life, it is probable that as many as fifty million persons

in the United States experience all or some of the time the feeling that they are in some measure excluded, that they are in this respect members of "minority groups."

\* \* \*

### *Variant Patterns of Ethnic Group Relationships*

The bases of ethnic group differentiation, whether race consciousness or nationality, whether religion or some other cultural factor, vary greatly with the social-historical conditions. So do the nature and intensity of the relationships.

*Illustrations of ethnic systems.* The literature describing the group features of different communities contains an almost endless amount of material on the numerous ethnic arrangements that man has devised at different times and in different places. The multiplicity of these various systems should warn us of the necessity of viewing any particular ethnic structure with relation to the peculiar historical circumstances within which it has emerged. . . . Ethnic group relations are thus the products of historical conditions. The specific characteristics which people find to be of significance in establishing their group loyalties and in determining their group divisions are always relative to the social and cultural context. This is why we cannot attribute to color or other physical traits *as such*, or language *as such*, or religious belief *as such*, any fundamental role in the explanation of ethnic systems, or use any such "factor" as a principal lead in diagnosing tensions between ethnic groups.

\* \* \*

*The position of ethnic groups in the social structure.* What kinds of circumstance deter-

mine the position of ethnic and racial groups in the community structure? Why, for example, is the status of the Portuguese one thing in New England coastal towns and another in Hawaiian seaports; or why have the Jews in China had a history completely different from their experience in Western countries? There are no easy answers to these questions, as our discussion of the variety of ethnic patterns and of the importance of particular conditions indicates. But certain types of circumstance clearly and significantly affect ethnic relationships and the social status of ethnic groups in almost all regions marked by ethnic divisions.

### 1. Number and size of ethnic groups.

When a large number of ethnic groups live within the same community it is probable that the different groups will possess quite different statuses and will experience different degrees of prejudice and discrimination. Thus the Negro in this country "has become the principal shock absorber of the anti-minority sentiment of the dominant whites": he is, in fact, discriminated against by the members of other ethnic minorities, sometimes even more openly than he is by the "Older Americans."<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

The size of the ethnic groups also helps to determine its position in the social system. The relatively easy accommodation of one or two "foreign" families in the small American town, for example, or the general social acceptance of the Negro in the urban areas of France, stands in sharp contrast to the aggravated situation that is likely to develop when numerous representatives of the ethnic group enter the community. When the dominant group is matched in size or is outnumbered by a subordinated people, as in sections of the South and in most colonial countries, the latter is frequently believed to be a threat to the ongoing way of life and various official and informal devices are employed to maintain the social status quo. Both the number and the size of "minority" groups affect the group relations,

<sup>1</sup> L. Wirth, "The Problem of Minority Groups," in Ralph Linton (ed.), *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, Columbia University Press, 1945, p. 353.

to be sure, but these factors take on their significance only in conjunction with others.

2. *Physiological differences.* These differences also function only in relationship with other factors. Considerable experimental evidence tells us that human beings possess no "natural" or inborn antipathy toward others of a different color or appearance. Yet these visible marks of difference assume great importance in a social environment in which a tradition of slavery or some other type of obvious exploitation or of open discrimination has been nourished. The subordinate status of Negroes, Orientals, and Indians, and of white peoples of swarthy appearance in the United States is reinforced by their recognizable physical characteristics, by their deviation in this respect from the stereotyped "Nordic" norm. But we must emphasize again that these differences *as such* play merely a secondary role in determining intergroup relations, though they may assume great importance in the maintenance of relations already established.

3. *Cultural differences.* When language, religion, or other cultural traits distinguish "minority" peoples they have a divisive influence. Cultural differences frequently involve different and sometimes irreconcilable contradictions in basic values. The extreme conflicts between Jew and Arab in Palestine and between Moslem and Hindu in India are intensified by the contrasting religious and philosophical viewpoints of the different groups. It would be a mistake, however, to explain these tensions without taking into account such crucial aspects as growing national sentiment and divergent economic and political programs. Religious belief may help to solidify the ethnic group itself and may deepen the demarcation between groups, but it may, if the belief incorporates a system of universalist values, such as the nondogmatic faiths of the Taoist and the Confucian, have the opposite effect of discouraging intergroup controversy.

### 4. *Opposing values and the social structure.*

If the relative absence of ethnic tension in a community like China is closely associated with the inclusive nature of traditional Oriental religious philosophy, its conspicuous pres-

ence in our own country is no less related to certain fundamental values in American social life. The doctrines of "fair play," social equality, and equal opportunity should, we might assume, work against the formation of disturbing ethnic divisions—and so they have in many instances, as the history of assimilation shows. But other influences and values, including the individual's drive for material affluence, his zealous guarding of status once gained, his fear of any real or supposed threat to his own social and occupational and political . . . prerogatives, his traditional but disappearing insularity from cosmopolitan diversities, are forces that powerfully support the imposed barriers between the dominant White-Anglo-Gentile majority and the racial and ethnic minorities. The resulting inconsistency between democratic values, espoused in some measure by all members of the community, and discriminatory restrictions, experienced to some extent by perhaps a third of the population, guarantee an unstable and troublesome disequilibrium in the social structure, which is both a reflection and a cause of the contradictions and frustrations experienced by the individual.

\* \* \*

## ETHNIC AND RACIAL GROUPS AS "CASTES"

### *Are Racial and Ethnic Groups "Castes"?*

Caste . . . always rests on differences determined at birth, differences that cannot be changed by individual achievement, economic or professional or political, or by any other means. It would seem, then, that those intracommunal racial and ethnic lines, which constitute social barriers that are wholly insurmountable, are at the same time marks of caste in the social structure. This conception is central in the approach of a number of investigators who recently have been studying the American Negro-White situation, and is one, we believe, that merits a wider application. In this section we shall discuss this view and examine particularly its usefulness in analyzing ethnic group relationships in the United States.

*Criticisms of the caste approach.* The designation of racial or ethnic groups in an open-class society as "castes" is criticized by certain writers on various grounds. In the first place, it is pointed out, a caste system, such as that in traditional Hindu society, is a stable order in which each group not only has a rigidly defined status and function but one in which the lower castes are not moved to improve their position. So long as the system itself and the values that sustain it are not shaken by the impact of an alternative set of institutions, the individuals within it do not struggle against the caste lines. A contrary situation holds in a mobile society. The Negroes in this country, for example sense very strongly their lower status, the prejudice and discrimination practiced against them, and, especially, the inconsistency between their social position and democratic equalitarian values. Rather than a stable "caste," they are, we are told to remember, members of an exploited economic class as well as of a race-conscious group. In the second place, their status in this respect is understandable only if we trace the historical pattern of its development, noting that racial prejudice and the attitudes associated with it grew up as a result of the economic exploitation of early capitalism when in various colonial countries including certain of the American settlements, the Negroes (as well as other non-European peoples) were forced to become a cheap labor supply. Finally, it is claimed that when social scientists treat ethnic or racial groups as "castes," they are not only misconstruing the nature of a "true" stable caste system but they are consciously or unconsciously avoiding the heart of the problem, namely the economic exploitative aspect, the one that must be recognized and remedied if either effective analysis or a genuine alteration of the situation is to be accomplished.

\* \* \*

*The utility of the caste approach.* We should not lightly dismiss these arguments. Certainly there are large differences between the status and particularly the aspirations of, say, a lower-caste Hindu and an American

Negro. . . . Again, we would agree that any analysis of the Negro-White relationship that disregarded or underestimated the economic situation, in both its historical and its contemporary aspects, is very apt to be misleading. But these considerations hardly constitute sufficient reason for the abandonment of the concept of caste in the study of Western society, or for the claim made by Professor Cox that even the use of the term *castelike* "confuses the problem." For the principal of caste, which assigns status on the basis of pre-determined differences, whether racial or cultural, is unmistakably at work in many societies and significantly affects the social position of many groups. . . . Among the situations that are marked by different degrees of the element of caste, as we have defined it, are the relations between the American dominant group and such minorities as the Negroes, the Orientals, the Mexicans, and the Jews. Moreover, if we wish to portray the total social structure of the United States as an interacting and ongoing system, a system *all* the major features of which will necessarily bear upon any future far-reaching developments, we would be something less than realistic if we passed over the caste element in our society or if we concentrated solely on its economic aspects.

#### *The Negro in the United States*

These considerations and others have led several sociologists and social anthropologists, among whom W. Lloyd Warner has, perhaps, exercised the predominant influence, to undertake detailed investigations of the "caste" relationship between Negro and White, especially by focusing upon the group arrangements within local communities in this country. The marks of caste in this relationship are unmistakable: the inheritance of a culturally defined status, the endogamous prescriptions, the strict limitation of social intercourse, the existence of an elaborate myth complex with its attribution of inferior and "unclean" qualities to the subordinated caste, the rigid but one-sided sex taboos.

• • •

#### *The Caste Element in Other Ethnic and Racial Groups*

In a population as diverse as ours, and in a society in which the ethnic "norm" is taken to be White-Northern-European-Protestant, there are, of course, several groups other than the Negro set apart by varying degrees of social distance. The attitudes of dissociation and of superiority of the traditionally dominant element in the United States are often sufficiently powerful and the resulting discriminations sufficiently severe that this element maintains a superordinate "caste" status with relation to various minority groups.

*Some lesser "castes."* Among such minorities we may designate as subordinated "castes" the Orientals, most of the Spanish-speaking groups, and the American Indians. The Chinese, for example, originally brought to this country as a "coolie" labor force, numbered over 100,000 in 1890; the figure today is less than 80,000. The Chinese have experienced extreme discrimination, in some instances brutality; have been subject to "exclusion" legislation, resulting in a predominantly male population and preventing naturalization; and have been segregated in the overcrowded "Chinatowns" of a few large cities. Even more the target for the racist doctrine of the "Yellow Peril" have been the Japanese, totaling over 125,000 persons in 1941. In that year over half of this group inhabited "Little Tokyos" in the urban centers; and almost as large a number were farmers on the West coast, severely restricted in their landowning and production operations by the Alien Land Acts. The story of the peacetime treatment of the Japanese, let alone the "relocation" story of four fifths of them during World War II, is, again, the record of a discriminated color-caste. A similar record marks the longer history of the more than 3,000,000 Spanish-speaking people, a majority of whom are the Mexicans of the Southwest. The census designation of this group as "White," no doubt a wise practice, does not mean that its members enjoy "White" privileges, economically or socially or politically—indeed the "caste" status of the Mexican is as conspicuous in such

states as Texas and California as is that of the Negro in the Deep South. The American Indians, though they were not regarded as belonging to a "lower" race by the original European arrivals on this continent, in the course of its settlement not only have been relegated to such a status but have, until the important reversal of this trend in recent years, suffered severe losses of population and enforced segregation. This small castelike group, only about one fourth of 1 percent of the United States population today, has had, in the process of our emergence as a modern nation, an important part in shaping our objectively ungrounded attitudes of superiority toward all colored minorities. We may add to this list of peoples whose physical inheritance almost guarantees, under present social conditions, their designation as in some degree "untouchable," and therefore not eligible for full participation in the community life, the Filipino, the Puerto Rican, the Virgin Islander, and other smaller groups of mixed biological composition.

*The complex case of the Jewish people.* Unlike the physically distinguishable groups that make up the relatively recently formed "color-castes" in American society, the Jewish people has been set apart by a deep fissure line which has a very long history in the Western world. The effects of the centuries-old tradition of exclusion are evident not only in the Jews themselves but, perhaps more significantly, in the various groups that have been responsible for their persecution, their segregation, and the discriminations practiced against them. The religious factor

played an important role in the earlier period, to be sure, but in the course of European and American history this factor became highly intermeshed with racialism and with economic, political, and cultural factors; and today it is by no means true that the Jews represent a solidified religious body. Here we cannot examine this historical record, nor even its most horrifying episode, the recent mass murders undertaken by the Nazis, an event which has gone far to unify the Jews in this country. But we must emphasize the fact that *in this historical process*, and *not* as a result of any unique "racial" or inherent traits, were patterned the defensive-aggressive responses and the special abilities that enabled the Jews to develop for themselves occupational opportunities not seized upon by others, such as trading and moneylending in the earlier period. Their success in combining a keen speculativeness in economic matters with a strongly conservative socio-religious system brought about new antagonisms and new discriminations. And the latter were stimulated once more when in recent times some Jewish intellectuals found in radical or revolutionary doctrines a solution to the social frustrations imposed upon their people. Add to these circumstances the necessity of the Jews, a necessity enforced by extreme exclusion, to seek psychological and, at times, economic security only within their own people, and the perpetuation of their own cultural ways—which in itself need not be a ground for discrimination—and we have a combination of conditions that places them in certain respects in the situation of a caste.

## 27 • Color Caste: Basic Issues

We have said that racial and ethnic discrimination pose an important domestic and foreign-relations problem. But what, precisely, is the nature of the problem? What issues are at stake? The following passage attempts to clarify these questions, especially as they apply to Negro-white relationships in Chicago. It indicates also, in a general way, the issue as it appears in the South. But by identifying the sources of tension in the more

egalitarian atmosphere of Chicago, the authors of this selection present the issues that will still exist even after a minimum of equality has been obtained.

The passage has further significance which should not be overlooked. Many people are inclined to assume that the "race problem" is confined largely to the South. But every part of the nation has its ethnic-group distinctions and difficulties. Indeed, until very recently, at least, the discrimination against Mexicans and Orientals in the West and Southwest closely resembled that of the Deep South against Negroes. Drake and Cayton are concerned exclusively with Negro-white relationships, but by studying a Northern city they remind us that ethnic-group differences and tensions are an American and not simply a Southern problem.

*Black Metropolis*, the book from which this selection has been taken, received the Anisfeld-Wolf award for 1945 and was selected for the honor roll of the Schomburg Collection of the New York Public Library. St. Clair Drake is a sociologist and anthropologist teaching at Roosevelt University, Chicago. Horace Cayton, also a sociologist and anthropologist, has served as the director of the Parkway Community House in Chicago.

During the period of the Great Migration there was a widespread expression of fear that the color-line might not hold. While the fear applied to every aspect of Negro-white relationships, its most intense form was that of the "social-equality scare." In 1920 the *Chicago Tribune*, reflecting this general uneasiness, lashed out at "sociological transcendentalists" and "misguided sentimentalists," charging them with "spreading propaganda for *social equality*." Their activities were dubbed "even more vicious than Red propaganda among Negroes" (a reference to the activities of the IWW). Conceding that "agitation for *social equality* may have every support under the law and under what ought to be human justice," the *Tribune* vowed that social intermingling would never be sanctioned in Midwest Metropolis.

## WHAT IS SOCIAL EQUALITY?

When a Southerner says that he is against social equality his meaning is usually clear. He doesn't believe in addressing a Negro as

Mr. or Mrs. or Miss. He will not permit Negroes to call him by his first name. He doesn't approve of shaking hands with Negroes, or of eating or sharing sanitary facilities with them. He draws the line at sitting beside them in public places or allowing them to attend the same schools and churches. He definitely objects to intermarriage, and while he is not too censorious of sexual excursions across the color-line by white men, he keeps a ready rope for any Negro male who may dare to turn the tables.

A great deal of what the South would call "social intermingling" takes place in Midwest Metropolis without exciting apprehension or antagonism. In fact, lack of color-consciousness is the rule in most of the day-by-day contacts between Negroes and whites. Members of the two groups treat each other as individuals and react in terms of occupational roles, individual personality traits, or socioeconomic and cultural attributes rather than in terms of race.

Chicago Negroes and whites are thrown together in large numbers in work-situations where maintaining a rigid color-line would

[From *Black Metropolis*, copyright 1945 by St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton. Some footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc.]



not only be a nuisance, but would sometimes be economically unprofitable. With no compelling tradition of separate cafeteria facilities or sanitary arrangements, the large industrial plants of the region have maintained a general pattern of unsegregated facilities. On the whole this pattern has been accepted as normal. Some "semi-social" extensions inevitably arise from these contacts. Employees eat lunch together, call each other by their first names, play and joke with one another, share intimacies, gossip and news. In general both Negro and white workers, unless facing a crisis situation, exhibit very little color-consciousness on the job.

Color-distinctions are also minimized by the demands of economic necessity and political expediency. The white man doing business with Negroes, the salesman trying to close a deal, the labor leader rallying his followers, the politician seeking votes—all such types not only extend the ordinary courtesies to Negroes, but sometimes find themselves joking, back-slapping, dining, and otherwise fraternizing with them.

When white people in Midwest Metropolis express fear that Negroes will demand social equality, they do not mean these semi-social acts of courtesy, friendliness, and informal social intercourse. *They mean, rather, the prospect of Negroes' becoming members of white cliques, churches, and voluntary associations, or marrying into their families.*

\* \* \*

But the pattern of social segregation, although general, is not absolute. There have always been a few church congregations with both Negro and white members. A few Negroes have always lived in "white neighborhoods." Here and there, the semi-social contacts of Negroes and whites slide over into firm and fast friendships. There are even a few whites and Negroes who are married! Midwest Metropolis not only tolerates these deviations from the general pattern, but actually seems to accept them as a normal part of city life—not enthusiastically perhaps, not without some head-shaking—but generally in a spirit of "live and let live." This tolerance

of deviations is due in part to the fact that the average person is unaware of the extent to which such intermingling occurs. Being scattered and diffuse, the evidences are not general or obvious enough to excite apprehension. Isolated examples of full social equality do not seem to threaten the general pattern of segregation, and so long as they do not involve a given person's friends and relatives they do not necessarily disturb him.

\* \* \*

Ask a Negro civic leader in Midwest Metropolis whether "his people" want social equality, and he's likely to answer: "If you mean the right to procure goods and services anywhere—yes, absolutely. We don't call that social equality. If you mean the right to rent or buy a house anywhere in the city—why, of course. Is that social equality? If you mean a *yearning* to visit white people in their homes and to be visited by them—nonsense! But, as for the privilege of doing even that if both white and Negro individuals desire it—why not? This is a free country. Inter-marriage? Well, it takes two to get married, and if one of them is white, what right has the law to interfere? But why should Negroes seek to marry whites? They have all colors within their own race [punctuated with a nervous laugh]. What Negroes *really* want is equal economic opportunity and enough room to live in. If you give us that, and just leave people alone, these social problems will work themselves out. Why raise the question of social equality, anyhow? Nobody's pressing that issue. You can't legislate social equality, and it's certainly not democratic to legislate against it."

This is the "advanced view" of most Northern Negro leaders. There are many Negroes in Midwest Metropolis, however, who, as a matter of either expediency or sincere conviction, will proclaim the philosophy of Booker T. Washington: "In all things purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." These are reassuring words, and most white people seem to appreciate hearing them. In fact, many "friends of the Negro"

seem to regard it as *lese majesté* when a responsible Negro leader publicly sanctions social intermingling and intermarriage. To do so, they argue, may alienate the less emancipated whites who could be won over to support the more limited goals of political and economic equality for Negroes.

\* \* \*

Despite this almost complete adjustment to social segregation, there are situations in which resentment against the pattern is openly expressed. A Negro may have no desire to marry a white person or to make sexual excursions across the color-line; but he usually gets boiling mad at any attempts to break up mixed couples in a public place or to legislate against intermarriage. Negroes generally do not display the least interest in joining white churches, but when a white pastor preaches a "good will" sermon in a Negro church, there is likely to be a great deal of grumbling about "insincerity," and some biting comments about "white Christianity" with its "Jim-Crow churches."

There are certain border-line situations, too, in which Negroes feel that they should be accepted for participation, but which white people often define as "social" or "private." Thus a Negro who does not interpret separate cliques, families, churches, and voluntary associations as "unfair" or "unjust" might expect to be included in a dance sponsored by a store where he works, a school that he attends, or a union to which he belongs. In the planning of dances, picnics, or parties the question arises as to how the Negroes should be treated. Whenever Negroes in such a situation are ignored, barred, or subjected to "special arrangements" they usually resent it. Nobody likes to feel "left out" or to be regarded as a "problem." Sometimes Negroes will put up a fight for inclusion in such activities. More often they will withdraw and mask the snub by feigning a total lack of interest in the proceedings or by professing a preference for the company of Negroes. Those who elect to fight usually make it clear that they consider the issue one of "civil" or "economic" rights rather than one of social equal-

ity. Those who decide to withdraw accept the definition of the situation as *social* and disavow a desire to participate.

When a white person does make friendly overtures, these are often viewed with suspicion—"he must have something up his sleeve," or "she doesn't really mean it." Negroes assume *prima facie* that even the friendliest approaches are hedged about with reservations and hesitations, if not actual insincerity. The disavowal of interest in social relations with white people is partly a protective device against actual embarrassment, since "socializing" across the color-line usually takes place in an atmosphere of constraint and uneasiness. Both Negroes and whites in such situations are constantly exposed to expressions of disapproval by both races, and it seems much simpler for each to stay on his own side of the color-line.

\* \* \*

Since there is no mass demand for social equality defined in terms of segregated cliques, families, clubs, and churches, many conservative Negroes and white people decry any tendency to discuss the issue. There is, however, a growing awareness in Black Metropolis of a fact which thoughtful students have long recognized, and which has been stated clearly by the Swedish economist, Gunnar Myrdal, whose monumental study of Negro-white relations in the United States, *An American Dilemma*, is accepted as definitive:

Social discrimination is powerful as a means of keeping the Negro down in all other respects. In reality it is not possible to isolate a sphere of life and call it "social." There is in fact a "social" angle to all relations. . . . The interrelationships between social status and economic activity are particularly important. . . . As long as Negroes, solely because of their color, are forcibly held in a lower social status, they will be shut out from all middle-class occupations except in their own segregated social world. . . . Social segregation involves a substantial element of discrimination.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, Harper, 1944, p. 601.

The specter of social equality will no doubt continue to haunt the scene so long as social segregation is forcibly imposed upon Negroes. It becomes a source of tension, however, only when it is actively evoked by white interest groups, or when there is a wide difference of opinion as to what constitutes social equality. An examination of the analysis below will reveal that there are some things which whites call social equality, but which Negroes do not think of as such. Around these critical foci tension arises. (Note situations marked by asterisk.)

There is continuous pressure from the Negro side to have white people accept a more restricted definition of social equality—to include only intermarriage, and familial, church, and associational relationships. Some of the relations that Negroes would define as “non-social,” however, are those in which racial attitudes of white people are reinforced by considerations of economic interest or social prestige (as in the situations marked with asterisks). Tension will continue so long as disagreement in the evaluation of these contacts exists.

#### AREAS OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN NEGROES AND WHITES AS TO THE MEANING OF SOCIAL EQUALITY

| <i>Area of Agreement</i><br>(no pressure from Negroes against the color-line) | <i>Area of Uncertainty</i><br>(some Negroes exert pressure against the color-line; some whites resist; others accept situation as semi-social) | <i>Area of Disagreement</i><br>(general pressure from Negroes who do not interpret these situations as “social,” although white people have a tendency to do so) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Intermarriage                                                              | * 1. Negro residence throughout the city                                                                                                       | * 1. White-collar employment outside of Black Belt                                                                                                               |
| 2. Membership in white cliques, churches, and social clubs                    | * 2. Use of commercial recreational facilities outside Black Belt                                                                              | 2. Membership in business and professional associations                                                                                                          |
| 3. Visiting and entertaining across the color-line.                           | 3. Use of sanitary facilities, elevators, etc., in hotels and apartment houses outside Black Belt                                              | 3. Use of hospital facilities outside of Black Belt and in all city hospitals                                                                                    |
|                                                                               | 4. Attendance at social affairs of unions, professional and technical societies, or at place of employment                                     | * 4. Unrestricted use of beaches and parks throughout the city                                                                                                   |
|                                                                               | 5. Interracial dancing at affairs listed in (4)                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                  |

## 28 • The Pathological Impact of Caste

Attention has already been called to the fact that the primary educational significance of class and caste lies in their impact on personality and character. One aspect of this educative effect is the fact that each of these status groupings occupies a specific position on a superiority-inferiority scale. The social distinctions engendered by caste, however, are much sharper than those created by class.

In the following passage, Buell G. Gallagher points to the maladjustments in personality produced by the caste system. He emphasizes, moreover, that personality in the superior caste is warped no less than personality in the subordinate caste. But he confines his analysis largely to the miseducative effects of caste on the Negro.

Gallagher, now president of the City College of New York, served for many years as the president of a Negro college in the Deep South.

Not the least important aspect of the caste system is its results in seriously malconditioning the individuals whose psychological growth is strongly affected by a caste-divided society. These influences are not limited to the Negro caste. They stamp themselves upon the dominant caste as well. They strongly affect the general pattern of social life.

The conflicting welter of attitudes and opinions which the caste-class system nurtures inevitably brings unbalance in psychological processes, and personalities are warped. A divided society tends to drive its divisive and disintegrating forces into the vital inner processes of personality growth. The baleful effects are not limited to either caste. It is a real question which personality is impoverished the more—that of the well-meaning paternalist or that of the object of such paternalism. It is likely that the victim of persecution is not more seriously warped in personality than are his persecutors. Hatred not only does something to the victims, it also marks those who do the hating. The false pride which exists only while it has a

dubious base in contempt for others is dearly bought. If we had presumed to study the educational problem for both racial groups, we should be forced to examine in some detail the various typical maladjustments of personality within the Caucasian caste which grow out of the caste system.

But we are concerned mainly with the difficulties which the caste system places in the way of normal, happy, useful and well-balanced development of the personalities of persons in the Negro caste. Certain broad classifications may be helpful in describing the pathological results of the caste system as it impinges upon Negroes.

Denied equality of status, the Negro develops a diversity of attitudes. He may “laugh it off.” He learns to smile in spite of hardship, to sing in the face of catastrophe and disappointment. This is more than whistling to keep up one’s courage passing the graveyard. This is a definite psycho-hygienic technique for keeping a modicum of equanimity and sanity in the face of crushing circumstance. This is the attitude which gave birth to the “sorrow songs,” the pouring out of the unde-

[From Buell G. Gallagher, *American Caste and the Negro College*, Columbia University Press, 1938, pp. 105-109. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

feated hopes and deep yearnings of the spirit in the spirituals which have been unequalled in American musical development for sheer poignancy and emotional meaning. At best this attitude leads to a high-minded and beautiful religious escape mechanism, in which the individual who is denied a just share of this world's goods looks to the hereafter for compensation and solace. He is not happy and carefree; but he goes on from day to day, living in the hope of a better day. "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen/ Glory hallelujah!" He does not face the issues of life squarely; he sings his sorrow songs and waits for the future.

At worst, this flight from the world leads the individual to play the part of the clown, the buffoon, the jester. Caught in a difficult circumstance, he makes a clever remark, cuts a caper, executes a jaunty dance step, forces a hearty laugh at his own expense, or just acts "plain dumb." As the slave, when caught in some petty misdeed, grinned and pulled at his forelock to escape punishment, so some Negroes today escape the more troublesome consequences of adulthood in an inequitable and hostile society by refusing to appear as adults, masquerading as children. Many whites see this, and conclude that the Negro is happy-go-lucky, carefree, contented, and childlike. What they are really seeing is a very adroit piece of acting which has been so continuously used that it has become an established social pattern. The minstrel show has given wide currency to the stereotype; and the Negro has learned through experience that if he will accept the stereotype as a description of himself, he will frequently avoid serious clashes and emerge from difficult situations with his skin whole. One has witnessed this phenomenon, for example, in the conduct of a university professor, a highly educated man, who dropped into the vernacular, affected a slouching posture and a "dumb" face, as a reward for which he was dismissed by the traffic officer with nothing but a quick oath of anger mixed with disgust. Clowning is a definite social pattern used by Negroes to pull the leg of gullible whites. It feeds the vanity of the white; but it violates

the self-respect of the hypocrite who is forced to debase himself to save his skin.

A third attitude may be called resignation, with varying degrees of sullenness or moroseness. Having the sense of inferiority impressed upon him from birth, and passing through many experiences which reinforce that early training, the individual ceases to have ambition or hope. His motto becomes, "Do what de man say." He resigns himself to mediocrity, or less. He does not strive to better himself, his condition, or his status. He learns that what he and his fellows think or desire is of no concern to the powers that control his destiny. Nothing can be done about it. Much of what looks to the outsider like laziness or shiftlessness is merely this defeatism and resignation which have been beaten into the individual by a niggardly society which has denied him the hope of being anything or anybody. It is a culture pattern which is most frequently found among the sharecroppers of *both races*; but when the stereotype "All Negroes are lazy" is used as a defense for wage differentials and other forms of discrimination, that stereotype gains a degree of specious acceptance out of the prevalence of this defeatist attitude which the Negro has learned as one of the culture patterns which the caste system encourages him to develop.

A fourth attitude, one which is much less common, and which is developed less by osmosis and social suggestion than by reaction and rebellion, is the attitude of revolt. Bitter, even envenomed, the individual becomes more and more antisocial, waiting for the chance to strike back at a world which has given him nothing but crusts and cursed at him for wanting more. He may develop pathological delusions of grandeur, fancying himself to be the Messiah. He may identify himself with a dream of the coming revolution and work for the growth of some radical movement. Or he may strike out blindly against whatever members of society happen to be nearest and most obviously in his way at a particular time of emotional strain; and the jails have another "criminal" to whom they may furnish board and lodging.

Almost it might appear that the stereotypes of the Negro as intensely religious, as funny and ludicrous, as sullen and shiftless, or as a threat to society, have some founding in fact. But that apparent fact is not due to peculiar biological heritage, a function of dark skin and African blood. It is created by the society which prescribes the possible limit of development of persons born into the Negro caste, thereby making normal, well-rounded psychological growth very difficult for the average Negro. To be sure, many persons of color are clowns, many are erratically religious, many are sullen and indifferent to standards of decent life, and many are bitter and anti-social; but these are the inevitable results of the caste system for which not the Negro but the white race is responsible. By the attitudes of mingled fear, hostility, deprecation, dis-

crimination, amused patronage, friendly domination, and rigid authoritarianism, the white caste generates opposite and complementary attitudes in the Negro caste. It is a touch of consummate irony that the dominant group should then argue that the characteristics which exhibit themselves in the submerged group are "natural," or "racial."

While the foregoing comment applies broadly to the whole range of personality maladjustments which the caste system nourishes, it is not implied that the four general types of difficulty mentioned in the preceding pages are the only types of pathological development to be noted. The variety of patterns is as great as the number of individuals involved. The crude classification here given merely provides a suggestion for the cataloguing and analyzing of the individual cases as these are met.

## 29 • Interrelationships: Prejudices and Life Conditions

Persons occupying a favored position in society often insist that those in less favored circumstances occupy an inferior position in society because of inherent defects in character. Moreover, they can frequently cite behavior which, on the surface, at least, appears to justify this conclusion. Thus Aristotle, in ancient Athens, asserted that some men are slaves by nature, and thus modern landowners point to laziness and lack of ambition displayed by many of their agricultural workers—white, Negro, and Mexican.

But this argument overlooks the fact that character is often shaped by life conditions. On this ground, Rousseau answered Aristotle with the statement that "there was never a slave according to nature until there was first a slave contrary to nature." Even ability is influenced and nurtured by the social environment. Moreover, although there probably are innate *individual* differences in ability, the evidence does not indicate that there are any major differences in the native ability of different races and ethnic groups. And although the upper classes probably contain a higher *percentage* of native ability as measured by intelligence tests, the members of lower classes are so much more numerous that a very large part of our best human resources will be found among the children of these groups.

In the following passage, Gunnar Myrdal—a noted Swedish sociologist, whose *American Dilemma* is generally regarded as a modern classic, examines the relationship

[From Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, Harper and Bros., 1944, Vol. II, pp. 1066-1068. Reprinted by permission.]

between life conditions and prejudice. Myrdal finds that the relationship is mutual and cumulative—that is, the better the life condition, the less the degree of prejudice, and vice versa. Thus, an improvement in either factor produces an improvement in the other, and the two continue to spiral upward in mutual reinforcement. Similarly, a deterioration in either factor begins a downward spiral which continues until counteracted by some outside force. Myrdal states this relationship in the context of his discussion of the Negro problem. But the relationship itself—known generally as the principle of cumulation or of reciprocal reinforcement—is capable of general application.

In considering the Negro problem in its most abstract aspect, let us construct a much simplified mental model of dynamic social causation. We assume in this model society of our imagination a white majority and a Negro minority. We assume, further, that the interrelation between the two groups is in part determined by a specific degree of "race prejudice" on the side of the whites, directed against the Negroes. We assume the "plane of living" of the Negroes to be considerably lower than that of the whites. We take, as given, a mutual relationship between our two variables, and we assume this relationship to be of such a type that, on the one hand, the Negroes' plane of living is kept down by discrimination from the side of the whites while, on the other hand, the whites' reason for discrimination is partly dependent upon the Negroes' plane of living. The Negroes' poverty, ignorance, superstition, slum dwellings, health deficiencies, dirty appearance, disorderly conduct, bad odor and criminality stimulate and feed the antipathy of the whites for them. We assume, for the sake of simplicity, that society, in our abstract model, is in "balance" initially. By this we mean that conditions are static, that our two variables are exactly checking each other: there is—under these static conditions—just enough prejudice on the part of the whites to keep down the Negro plane of living to that level which maintains the specific degree of prejudice, or the other way around.

If now, in this hypothetically balanced state, for some reason or other, the Negro

plane of living should be lowered, this will—other things being equal—in its turn increase white prejudice. Such an increase in white prejudice has the effect of pressing down still further the Negro plane of living, which again will increase prejudice, and so on, by way of mutual interaction between the two variables, *ad infinitum*. A cumulative process is thus set in motion which can have final effects quite out of proportion to the magnitude of the original push. The push might even be withdrawn after a time, and still a permanent change will remain or even the process of change will continue without a new balance in sight. If, instead, the initial change had been such a thing as a gift from a philanthropist to raise the Negro plane of living, a cumulative movement would have started in the other direction, having exactly the same causal mechanism.

\* \* \*

The Negroes' "plane of living" is, however, a composite entity. Let us, while retaining our major assumptions, approach a more realistic conception by splitting up this quantity into components, assuming that the cumulative principle works also in their causative interrelations. Besides "relative absence of race prejudice on the side of whites," we introduce a number of variables: levels of "Negro employment," "wages," "housing," "nutrition," "clothing," "health," "education," "stability in family relations," "manners," "cleanliness," "orderliness," "trustworthiness," "law observance," "loyalty to society at

large," "absence of criminality" and so on. All these variables—according to our hypotheses—cumulate. In other words, we assume that a movement in any of the Negro variables in the direction toward the corresponding white levels will tend to decrease white prejudice. At the same time white prejudice is assumed to be, directly or indirectly, one of the causative factors effective in keeping the levels low for the several Negro variables. It is also our hypothesis that, on the whole, a rise in any single one of the Negro variables will tend to raise all the other Negro variables and thus, indirectly as well as directly, result in a cumulatively enforced effect upon white prejudice. A rise in employment will tend to increase earnings; raise standards of living; and improve health, education, manners and law observance and *vice versa*; a better education is assumed to raise the chances of a higher salaried job, and *vice versa*; and so all the way through our whole system of variables. Each of the secondary changes has its effect on white prejudice.

If, in actual social life, the dynamics of the causal relations between the various factors in the Negro problem should correspond to our hypotheses, then—assuming again, for the sake of simplicity, an initially static state of balanced forces—*any change in any one of these factors, independent of the way in which it is brought about, will, by the aggregate weight of the cumulative effects running back and forth between them all, start the whole system moving in one direction or the other as the case may be, with a speed depending upon the original push and the functions of causal interrelation within the system.*

Our point is not simply that many forces are "working in the same direction." Originally we assumed that there was a balance between these forces, and that the system was static, until we introduced one push coming in at one point or the other. When the system starts rolling, it is true that *the changes in the forces*—though not all the forces themselves—work in one direction; but this is because the variables are assumed to be interlocked in such a causal mechanism that a change of any one causes the others to change

*in the same direction*, with a secondary effect upon the first variable, and so on.

\* \* \*

The individual factors into which we split the Negroes' plane of living can, of course, be split again, and it is the purpose of scientific analysis to do so. The causal relations between the sub-factors, and between them and all other factors, will be assumed to be ruled by the same cumulative principle. White race prejudice, here assumed as the "cause" of discrimination, is not a solid and static factor. To begin with, it depends upon discrimination itself. If, for some reason—for example, the demand of the employer during a war emergency, or the ruling of a trade union—white workers actually come to work with Negroes as fellow workers, it has been experienced that prejudice will often adjust to the changed amount of discrimination. White prejudice itself can be split into a great number of beliefs and valuations; to a degree, both of these two types of factors are dependent upon each other . . . and, consequently, are under the rule of the cumulative principle.

\* \* \*

Our chief task is to analyze the causal interrelation within the system itself as it works under the influence of outside pushes and the momentum of on-going processes within. The system is much more complicated than appears from our abstract representation. To begin with, all factors must be broken down by region, social class, age, sex and so on. As what we are studying is a race relation, the number of combinations increases by multiples for each classification applied. White prejudice, for instance, varies not only with the status of the white man, but also with the Negro's social class and the field of Negro behavior in relation to which race prejudice is active. There are also Negro prejudices in the system.

Each factor has its peculiarities and irregularities. White prejudice, for instance, changes not only as a reaction to actual changes in Negro plane of living, but also to



expectations of such changes. The latter reaction may be totally different from the former: a higher plane of living among Negroes, when it is actually achieved, may be expected to effect a *decrease* of white prejudice, but the

*expectation* of it for the future might *increase* prejudice, particularly in the South (even if its long-run effects—when it actually comes—will be, as we have assumed, a decrease of prejudice).

### SUMMARY

Every civilized society contains not only different groups but also a complex web of ordered hierarchies. Many of these hierarchies are highly specialized and functional—designed to produce organized, cooperative effort in some specific activity. But there are, also, more generalized social hierarchies, affecting many different aspects of human life, which have traditionally gone by the names of class and caste. A caste system is rigid and fixed, since it demands that every person remain throughout his life in the caste into which he was born. A class system is open and flexible since it admits, and at times encourages, some degree of mobility across class lines.

Historically, classes have been defined in national and economic terms. But much of the recent research on class structure in the United States has followed the pattern set by W. Lloyd Warner—that of local studies of social status and prestige. Class in the United States, therefore, now has two meanings: (1) economic groups, usually defined by income and occupation, and (2) social-status groups, defined by inclusion and exclusion in informal social intercourse. In this chapter we have examined the local status groups as revealed by the research of Warner and other scholars who have followed this general pattern. The economic groupings will be explored in the next chapter under the term *welfare levels*. Although status and economic groupings are not identical, they are closely interrelated.

Certain crucial points that emerge from the studies quoted in this chapter can be summarized as follows:

1. In general, five classes have been identified. There is, however, considerable local variation. In rural areas, only three or four classes may be found, whereas in New England and the old South a division of the upper class may produce a six-step scale. These classes are distinguished not only by wealth and occupation but also by "life style," education, participation in community activities, and place and type of residence. They even read different newspapers and magazines and, as a rule, belong to different churches.

2. The studies of class structure considered in this chapter are local community studies. Considerable care must be used, therefore, in generalizing the results of any one study. Outside the large metropolitan areas, however, there has been sufficient research to warrant the conclusion that, with due allowance for local variations, the general pattern of the class structure revealed by these studies prevails throughout the nation.

3. The most significant educational aspect of the class structure is the complexity of beliefs, attitudes, and habits reflected in the diverse life styles characteristic of the various classes. Since the character and personality of the child is inevitably influenced

by these ways of living, the teacher must have some knowledge of them if he is to understand the behavior, attitudes, and goals of his students.

4. The class structure in the United States is complicated by an ethnic-group structure which in some cases approaches a caste system. The most severe discriminations, of course, have been applied to the nonwhite portions of the population, especially Negroes, Orientals, and Mexicans of mixed Spanish and Indian blood. But, in varying degrees, all recent immigrant groups, including the Irish, the Italians, and the French Canadians, have been objects of derision and of economic and social discrimination. The Jews also have suffered from a special, but very real, type of social prejudice.

5. In some cases, ethnic-group discrimination has involved severe economic, political, and civil disabilities. The heart of the issue, however, is the demand for social equality, at least in the public sense. Negro leaders in Chicago, for example, grant that intimate social affairs are a matter for private, personal determination. But they resent all public forms of social discrimination including residential restriction, segregation in hotels, restaurants, theaters, swimming pools, and public dance halls, and the exclusion of Negroes from school, union, and company dances.

6. Like the social classes, ethnic groups—in so far as they embody a way of life—have a powerful educative effect on their members. Social discrimination, of course, tends to reinforce ethnic-group differences and hence to delay the absorption of immigrant groups into the body of the nation. In addition, however, the rigid pattern of superiority and inferiority enforced by the caste system produces serious personality maladjustments in the members of the subordinate caste. Gallagher, indeed, insists that the caste system induces different, but no less serious, maladjustments in the personalities of the members of the superordinate caste.

7. There is a reciprocal and cumulative relationship between life conditions and social prejudice.

Ethnic-group and class distinctions, since they tend to segment the nation, have created serious problems for the American people and for the teacher. But class and ethnic groups are not the only divisions existing in our society. There are, for example, the specialized group interests depicted in the preceding chapter. And there are, also, the different welfare levels which will be considered in the next chapter.

### THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. What is Warner's conception of social class? How, if at all, does it differ from the Marxian conception of class?

2. Most people in America think of themselves as belonging to no social class at all, and, if they are pressed, they are apt to say that they belong to the middle class like everybody else. Explain this.

3. Describe the method used by Warner and his associates to discover the class structure of American society. What are some of the criticisms of this method that could be made?

4. What are the economic and social correlates of the various social classes?
5. What is the difference between a social caste and a social class? May a caste be stratified into classes? List the castes that are to be found in American society.
6. How, if at all, is the motivation of an individual affected by his class membership? How are his language habits affected? His attitudes?

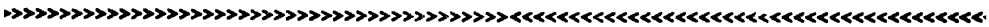
1. One of the most complete sources of information on the class structure and its effects is *Class, Status and Power: A Reader in Social Stratification*, edited by Reinhard Bendix and Seymour M. Lipset. You will find this book stimulating and helpful on almost every aspect of social stratification. If you wish to explore the literature on the class system in the United States, you will find the following works, in addition to those mentioned in the text, helpful. *Plantation County*, by Mortor Rubin, describes, among other things, the life styles of people in a Southern plantation area. James West, in *Plainville, U. S. A.*, describes the class pattern in a small Missouri community. *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, by W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, and *Deep South*, by Allison Davis, Burlcigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Cardner, are the basic references for the study of social class from the Warner point of view.

2. Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* is a definitive study of the Negro-white relationship in the United States. Elin L. Anderson, *We Americans*, and Ruth D. Tuck, *Not With the Fist*, are also worth consulting on ethnic group relationships. *We Americans* explores social stratification in Burlington, Vermont. *Not With the Fist* deals with the social status of Mexicans in a small city in the Southwest.

3. *American Community Behavior*, by Jessie Bernard, is a useful reference for most of the chapters in Parts II and III. For class and ethnic group stratification, see pp. 187-222, 318-355, 388-428.

## CHAPTER SIX

# Education and Welfare Levels



In the preceding chapter we examined social-prestige and status hierarchies in the United States as revealed by various studies of the social class and ethnic-group structure. But, as we noted in Chapter 5, there are also important economic hierarchies determined largely by occupation and income. In this chapter we shall explore these economic gradations, particularly as they relate to welfare levels. It is important to remember, however, that the status and economic hierarchies, though not identical, are very closely related. Therefore, it is not always possible to distinguish sharply the effects of these two hierarchies on the lives and characters of individual persons. High occupational and income levels, as we saw in the analysis of status classes, are important factors in establishing social prestige. Conversely, lower-lower-class patterns of living are conspicuous parts of the marginal or slum environment which will concern us in this chapter. In the case of many—perhaps most—individuals, class memberships as measured by status ratings are substantially identical with those measured by economic standing. To this extent, the distinction between economic and status classes simply refers to two different ways of looking at the same thing. In the case of other persons, however, economic and status classifications do differ. Despite the interrelation and the overlapping, it is therefore instructive to look at social class from both the status and the economic points of view.

### THE EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ECONOMIC LEVELS

The study of economic levels in American society, like the study of status groups, is important for the teacher because these gradations make a considerable difference in the beliefs, attitudes, and character of persons located at various points on the economic scale. If learning is largely a matter of experience, it is natural that, as Harold Laski has remarked, people who live differently also think differently. Every person develops a point of view or perspective which determines not only how he will interpret and evaluate “facts” but also what facts he will perceive. Years ago, Walter Lippmann

observed, in the course of an able discussion of stereotypes, that "we do not first see and then define, we define first and then see."<sup>1</sup> In one sense, social perspectives, growing out of different economic circumstances, are large-scale definitions. Obviously such definitions are enormously important in economic and political controversy. Commenting on this aspect of the matter, Lippmann goes on to say:

I am arguing that the pattern of stereotypes at the center of our codes largely determines what group of facts we shall see, and in what light we shall see them. That is why, with the best will in the world, the news policy of a journal tends to support its editorial policy, why a capitalist sees one set of facts, and certain aspects of human nature, literally sees them; his socialist opponent another set and other aspects, and why each regards the other as unreasonable or perverse, when the real difference between them is a difference of perception.<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that Lippmann indicates not only that each group perceives and interprets the "same" situation differently but also that each group regards the perceptions and interpretations of other groups as unreasonable. Indeed, as Robert Angell has pointed out, each group is apt to charge the others with treason to the American way of life. Differences in perspective lead to different views with respect to public policy. But they do more than that. They also produce serious difficulties in intergroup communication and understanding. Hence different groups, precisely because they see the "same" situation differently, tend in Mannheim's phrase, "to talk past one another." Guglielmo Ferrero, a distinguished European historian, has characterized this predicament as a "babel of tongues" in which "none understands the other."<sup>3</sup>

Obviously, differences in perspective create serious problems in education as well as in society. For the most part, pupils bring the perspectives and opinions of their parents to school with them. Hence, if only in order to understand their pupils, teachers should be aware of these diverse perspectives. And if, as Dewey asserts, the school has the obligation to help its pupils understand attitudes and opinions at variance with their own, knowledge on the part of the teacher of diverse perspectives—and the reasons for them—assumes an added importance.

Moreover, the educative significance of the economic hierarchy is not limited to its role in the formation of perspectives and points of view. Many social scientists, among them Ogburn and Nimkoff, have pointed out the close correlation between economic gradations and "life chances." As the evidence with respect to income levels and the incidence of disease and infant mortality shows, "life chances" can be taken literally. But as it is used in this chapter, the term has been broadened to include almost all aspects of personal welfare.

It is an error, of course, to assert that there is a precise correspondence between welfare and income. But, until the higher income brackets are reached, there is a sig-

<sup>1</sup> Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, Macmillan, 1922, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> Guglielmo Ferrero, *Words to the Deaf*, Putnam's, 1926, p. 150.

nificant relationship between the amount of income and social advantages. Housing, family budgets, and the quality of the neighborhood in which the family resides are in large measure a function of income. Even in the middle-income brackets, cultural and educational opportunities are often somewhat limited both by the nature of the social environment and by the lack of money. But in the case of more than a quarter of the nation's children, a poverty-stricken cultural and social environment is superimposed upon a seriously inadequate family income. The consequences, in terms of child welfare, can be—and often are—exceedingly grave. A comparison of four slum areas in the city of Chicago with four good areas in the same city revealed twenty times as much juvenile delinquency, twelve times as much mortality from tuberculosis, four times as much mortality from pneumonia, three times as much truancy, and more than twice as much infant mortality in the slum areas as in the good areas.<sup>4</sup>

### EDUCATIVE EFFECTS OF THE MARGINAL ENVIRONMENT

But the consequences of the marginal environment—in both rural and urban areas—are not limited to delinquency, disease, and death. For the most part, the lowest income groups (which now comprise about 20 percent of the total population and produce more than 20 percent of the children of the nation) live in a world of their own, socially and culturally isolated from the rest of the community. Almost always it is a drab world of squalor, persistent want, and long hours of hard labor at unrewarding tasks, punctuated by periods of unemployment. Diets are notoriously inadequate. Children often receive but little care; sometimes parents and neighbors are shiftless and lazy, but more often they are simply discouraged and worn out by poverty, disease, overwork, and constant worry. Most of these people are decent folk within the limits of their social standards, but crime and moral degeneracy are heavily concentrated in the areas in which they live. Educational standards are low; there are few papers or books, and but little intellectual stimulation. Opportunities to materially improve their status are few, and where they do exist, these people are seldom equipped to take advantage of them.

It is difficult for those who have always lived in comfortable circumstances to realize fully what it means for children to live under such conditions throughout their formative years. It is not simply that such children are “ill-housed, ill-clothed, and ill-fed.” It is, rather, that the physical, cultural, and esthetic poverty of their environment permeates every aspect of their personality and imposes serious obstacles to the full development of their potential capacity for normal and useful living. Constant poverty engenders a protective covering which tends to make children insensitive and brutal, and it produces marked feelings of inferiority and insecurity which are seldom wholly eradicated by subsequent success. When, as is almost always the case in the city, poverty is accompanied by overcrowding and lack of privacy, it typically leads to irritability, negativism, and a marked lack of self-sufficiency. The almost total absence of esthetic and intellectual

<sup>4</sup> Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, *Children and Youth at Mid-century*, Washington, D. C., Midcentury White House Conference, 1950, Chart 29.

In Selection 35, Ogburn and Nimkoff undertake to summarize some of the important studies of occupational mobility in our society. Finally, in Selection 36, Warner, Meeker, and Eells give their answer to the highly controversial question as to whether or not classes, as distinct from limited economic differentials, are consistent with the American ideal of equality.

### 30 • Social Class and Welfare Levels

Up to the present time, all complex, civilized societies—ancient and modern—have been characterized by marked inequalities of economic power and income. Further, as we have seen, economic power and wealth are closely correlated with social prestige. Consequently, some social scientists, including the authors of the following selection, have merged economic differentials and social status into a single hierarchy of social classes.

Writing from this point of view, William F. Ogburn and Meyer Nimkoff give a brief description of social classes in Roman and medieval civilizations. The primary emphasis in the selection, however, is on the relationship between income and the “life chances” of the individual, a subject to be treated more fully in subsequent readings.

In addition to the age and sex categories in which he is placed, every individual is at birth assigned to a particular social class. By a social class we mean two or more broad groups of individuals who are ranked by the members of the community in socially superior and inferior positions. Persons of both sexes and of all ages are included in a social class, which is mainly a group of families of comparable status, augmented by a number of individuals whose social status is higher or lower than that of their parents.

Where societies are composed of social classes, the social structure generally resembles a truncated pyramid, with the lowest social class at the base and the other social classes arranged above it in a hierarchy of rank and distinction. In Rome, for instance, there were the slaves, the large plebeian or

common class, and the five superior classes. In medieval European society the base of the social pyramid was occupied by the *theow* class. Successively higher in rank were the *cotters*, *villains*, free tenants, and lesser gentry, with the nobility, royalty, and ecclesiastical officials at the top. The members of the *theow* class were slaves, hence could be sold at will. The *cotters* and *villains* were serfs bound to the soil who could be sold into the services of every purchaser. The free tenants had land of their own, but were required to do a certain amount of work and pay certain fees to their lords. All governmental power rested in the hands of the nobles, the ecclesiastics, and the king. Because the social classes occupy different social levels or strata, the process of assigning individuals to social classes is called by the sociologist “social stratification.”

[From William F. Ogburn and Meyer Nimkoff, *Sociology*, 2d ed., Houghton Mifflin Co., 1950. pp. 139-143. Some footnotes and charts omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

*Social Class and "Life-Chances"*

Practically, the significance of a class system lies partly in the fact that it determines the social rewards of people. The members of a particular class have more or less the same "life-chances," that is, the same probability of securing the good things of life, such as freedom, a high standard of living, leisure, deference, or whatever things are highly valued in a given society. "The influential," as Lasswell aptly puts it, "are those who get the most of what there is to get."<sup>1</sup> Hence if we regard a social class as a group based on certain resemblances of its members, we must view it as a group of persons with similar social chances.

How do the social chances of different classes—say, the rich and the poor—vary in our own society? Let us consider the chances of staying alive. What chance of surviving the first year of life does the average baby born into a lower-class American family have compared with a baby born into a middle-class family? The infant mortality rates (number of deaths under one year of age per 1000 live births) for seven cities studied by Woodbury showed a decrease with increasing family income, as follows:

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Under \$450   | 167 |
| 450-549       | 106 |
| 550-649       | 117 |
| 650-849       | 108 |
| 850-1049      | 83  |
| 1050-1249     | 64  |
| 1250 and over | 59  |

In these communities, babies in families having \$450 a year had about three times as many chances of not surviving the first year of life as did babies in families with an annual income of \$1250.

Since the famous Woodbury study, there have been no data on infant death rates for United States families classified by income. The effort by public health agencies to reduce infant mortality may have narrowed the dif-

ferential between high- and low-income families. That they have not eliminated it is indicated by the infant mortality in 973 cities in 1939-1940 classified by average per-capita income. In the cities where the per-capita income was under \$675 a year, the infant deaths per 1000 live births numbered 47.8. When the income was between \$675 and \$850, the infant mortality rate was 42.6, and when the per-capita income was over \$850 a year, the infant death rate was 38.8. In computing these rates, hospitalization rates, the percentage white, and the size of city were held constant. The cities with high incomes have fewer infant deaths than cities with low incomes.

Despite this selective influence, which probably means that those with sounder physiques tend to survive, the babies that grow up to be men and women of the lower class do not have such good chances of staying well as do those with more income. In 1935-1936, about one third of all the families in the United States, or about 40,000,000 persons, received incomes of less than \$800 for the year, and of this group, one half were on public relief. A national health survey during the same period showed that the number of family heads not seeking work because of chronic disability was one in 20 for relief families, one in 33 in non-relief families with incomes under \$1000, and only one in 250 in higher income groups.

The poorest people were those most frequently sick, there being 57 percent more illnesses disabling for a week or more among relief families than among those with incomes of \$3000 or more. The relief families were also sick longer, the average case of disabling chronic illness lasting 65 percent longer than among those in the higher income brackets. Despite much less frequent and serious illness, families with incomes of \$3000 or more secured 46 percent more medical service, as measured by number of calls from a physician, than did relief families. The chances of staying well and of obtaining medical attention if ill are seen to be correlated with social class.

In much the same way a high positive correlation exists between social class position and mental and social health generally. The

<sup>1</sup> Harold Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How* (New York: McCraw-Hill Book Company, 1936), p. 3.



chances of a boy's becoming a juvenile delinquent or a public charge are in direct ratio to the economic status of his family, those on the lowest levels furnishing the greatest number of delinquents. On the other hand, a boy's chances of joining the Boy Scouts decrease as his family status decreases. In a comprehensive study of Rochester, New York, it was found that various types of social problems were most prevalent among relief families, the index of social disorganization correlating .94 with relief. In a later chapter evidence is furnished showing that the frequency of certain types of mental disorders is likewise associated with social class.

It is interesting to inquire how the chances a boy or girl has of going to college are affected by social class. Despite the fact that a good deal of higher education is provided by the state at a low cost to the student, it is found that 52 percent of the children of professional people go to college, as contrasted with only 5 percent of the children of unskilled laborers.

What are the chances of the lower class's obtaining justice in the courts? Much is made of "equality before the law" in our culture, but such equality exists in principle rather than in fact. We are so accustomed to thinking of crime in lower-class terms that when we picture criminals we usually visualize burglars, thieves, and gangsters, and seldom consider white-collar criminals or criminals in high places. Since it costs money to ask for justice, notwithstanding the legal-aid clinics available to the poor in a few places, the poor are less likely to seek redress for wrongs. If charged with a criminal offense, a poor man

is under a substantial handicap. Except in extreme cases like murder, the rich man so charged will be summoned, then released on bail. The poor man is likely to be arrested, and in default of the bail which he cannot furnish, will be remanded to jail—not the best place to build up a defense against the charges. The rich man may secure the ablest lawyers, expert witnesses, changes of venue, and delays. If he is at last found guilty, the usual sentence is a pecuniary fine, which means little to a man of means, but much to a poor man.

There is some evidence to show that a person's social class status affects his chances of developing a socially helpful personality. Children in two nursery schools were compared as to certain traits of personality. School *A* was attended almost exclusively by children whose parents were of the professional class, while the children in school *B* were those of working mothers. The children in the two schools were rated in respect to spontaneity of speech and drawing, persistence, cooperativeness, poise, eating and sleeping habits, self-care, and play initiative. Except for self-care, Group *A* rated consistently higher than *B*, especially in spontaneity, initiative, and poise. The superiority of Group *B* in self-care is easily understood, since with working mothers the children were obliged to look after themselves. The limitation of this study is that the testing itself is in the terms of upper-class values, but there is no gainsaying the fact that such traits as those mentioned above are socially helpful. The study shows that children on the lower economic levels are much less likely to develop such traits.

### 31 • Occupations and Welfare Levels

We have already noted that economic status is largely determined by occupation and income. Both the introduction to this chapter and Selection 30, from Ogburn and Nimkoff, are concerned primarily with income. The following selection, by Anderson and Davidson, analyzes the role of occupation in the social structure.

It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of occupation in shaping the life of the worker and his family. Indeed, we ordinarily identify a man by indicating his name and his occupation. Occupation is obviously related to income, and it is a significant factor in social prestige. But occupation is considerably more than just a way of making money; in its marked influence on the habits, interests, attitudes, and beliefs of those engaged in it, it is a way of life. More than fifty years ago William James, an eminent American philosopher and a pioneer in the field of modern psychology, observed,

Already at twenty-five you see the professional mannerisms settling down on the young commercial traveller, on the young doctor, on the young minister, on the young counsellor-at-law. You see the little lines of cleavage running through the character, the tricks of thought, the prejudices, the ways of "shop" in a word, from which the man can by-and-by no more escape than his coat sleeve can suddenly fall into a new set of folds.\*

In later readings we shall explore briefly some of the effects of occupation on character and personality. The following passage, however, is largely concerned with a description of the occupational hierarchy, together with some of the more obvious characteristics of workers in each of the chief classifications. H. Dewey Anderson is an economist who, with his colleague Percy E. Davidson (a professor of education), has been noted for his work in occupational research.

Occupation is of major significance in people's lives. It catches the attention of youth in their teens, often forcing them to undergo prolonged and arduous training. It disciplines youth and molds the behavior of adults. The scale of living of more than 95 per cent of all families in the United States is determined by

the gainful employment of their working members. The occupation one follows fills most of one's waking time. It assigns the individual a particular place in society, which can be changed only by most exceptional circumstances. It has much to do with determining the location and kind of residence of the fam-

\* William James, *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, Holt, 1890, p. 121.

[From Dewey Anderson and Percy E. Davidson, *Ballots and the Democratic Class Struggle*, copyright 1943 by the Board of Trustees of Leland Stanford Junior University, pp. 82-88.

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ily, and thereby the schooling, playmates, social contacts, and leisure-time activities of its various members.

The work a man does stamps him with distinguishable physical characteristics, markedly influences his health, forms the range of his conversation and intellectual interest, fastens upon him habits of dress and conduct, and defines the circle of his friends and acquaintances, who in turn have a powerful effect on his thoughts and actions.

A man's occupation soon becomes a primary concern in his life. Its problems of status, earnings, continued employment, and conditions of labor take on such significance that he associates with his fellows to improve or protect them. Not infrequently this requires political affiliations and activities. As this development occurs in an ever increasing number of occupations, the role of occupation as a driving force in political action increases proportionately.

Is this speculation of someone living in an ivory tower gazing down on the workaday world or are there facts supporting these generalizations? Occupational inheritance, prestige, income and such related characteristics as schooling, residence, and cultural status may be studied for an answer.

## THE OCCUPATIONAL PYRAMID

The occupational pyramid ranges from a broad base of unskilled workers through levels composed of more or less homogeneous occupational groups of workers, semiskilled, skilled, and clerical, also farmers, proprietors, managers and officials, and professional persons. It is not a natural product but is the result of the interplay of institutional forces which have produced marked stratification, in which those who occupy any level are recruited largely from among families on that or adjacent levels. The homely adage that "the acorn does not fall far from the tree" is borne out by the facts.

Studies to date depicting the characteristics of occupational groups are not sufficiently numerous or inclusive for final definition. Those

reported here are descriptive of average conditions and are helpful in picturing the labor force in terms of its social-economic composition.

### *Professional Persons*

The typical male professional person is one born into a well-to-do or wealthy family. He secures above-average schooling of a prolonged and specialized character with the aid of relatives or friends. He may engage in vacation or part-time work for pay during this training period, but upon completion of his professional schooling he moves directly into his professional career without preliminary floundering about in the occupational world seeking to gain a foothold. He has three years of college on the average—few have less than that, many have more. He receives an income which permits him to live above the comfort level. In the study being reported here, 85 per cent of professional men were married. The typical professional family had 1.6 children; a fifth had no children, a fourth three or more, and another fourth only a single child. While affected by unemployment during depressions and curtailment of income for those self-employed, professionals fare better than most other members of the gainfully employed during times of economic stress. The average professional lives in the better, more modern residential area in the community, and a substantial number own their own homes.

### *Proprietors, etc.*

This group includes merchants (wholesale and retail) and business managers and officials—the business community. There is a wide range among such workers, so that no single type appears. Yet certain characteristics of the majority of the group may be described as follows: They come from homes where the fathers were either farmers or business proprietors, so that ownership and management of property has characterized the occupational setting in which they have been reared. Estimates of occupational income indicate that in 1929 half of all business proprietors averaged less than \$1,300 a year income, that 80 per cent

received less than \$2,600, but that a small percentage received the highest occupational incomes paid out in the United States along with those of a few motion-picture stars.

Farmers are sometimes included in this category of workers in the study now being drawn upon, although there is such a wide range of circumstances among them—from those of millionaire citrus growers, cattle kings, and cotton-plantation owners to tenants and sharecroppers—that it is extremely difficult to generalize concerning them. For this reason, in the present study farmers have been placed in a separate group.

The usual education received by a proprietor is "some high school," averaging in this study a part of the first year. There are some proprietors, however, who have finished college and many who have not gone beyond the elementary school.

Average businessmen have incomes so low as to permit a bare-subsistence to a minimum-comfort level of living. A few among all businessmen receive a level of income approximating that of professional persons, permitting a moderate to well-to-do scale of living. These reside in the better residential area, frequently that occupied by professional persons. Although their income is seriously reduced by business depression, which dries up the purchasing power of the community and results in numerous business failures and bankruptcies, the above-average proprietor has community standing, property assets, insurance policies, and savings which enable him to weather all but the most protracted economic disturbances. But there is a very high rate of mortality among the general run of businessmen even in good times, so that their situation is precarious.

In the study being reported, three fourths of all proprietors were married, averaging 1.8 children per family; a fifth had no children, a fourth had three or more, and less than a third had only one child.

#### *Clerical and Kindred Workers*

Male persons working on the clerical level generally come from homes of clerks, propri-

etors, or skilled artisans. Yet a substantial though minor fraction come from other levels. The clerical group represents an "aspiring" class of people, many of whom have with difficulty acquired sufficient skill to admit them to white-collar status in the community. One of its characteristics is considerable formal schooling in comparison with the great body of gainful workers, for on the average clerks are better schooled than any group except professionals. The usual clerical worker in the study being reported had gone halfway through high school—a degree of schooling not attained by the average proprietor for whom he worked.

Approximately a third of all male clerical workers are single, and their income is sufficient to provide a minimum-comfort scale of living. Typical male clerical workers are married and average 1.4 children; a fourth have no children, 14 per cent have three or more, while a third have only one child. These clerks likewise dwell on the minimum-comfort level. Typical male clerks begin their working life on the clerical level, and remain there. Young female workers are numerous in the category, many of whom leave gainful work early to marry.

#### *Skilled Workers*

The typical skilled artisan comes from the home of a skilled or farmer father. Occupational inheritance of this level is quite pronounced. The dignity of the calling, traditions of handicraft in the family, relatively good circumstances in comparison with those of other manual laborers, and easier access to apprenticeship through the influence of the father and his working associates have contributed to produce this marked stratification. Older skilled workers averaged elementary-school education, although 40 per cent of all skilled workers in the study under review had been some time in high school and 7 per cent had gone beyond it. The pattern of employment involves early jobs in semiskilled occupations and ultimate apprenticeship in a skilled trade.

More than a fourth of all male skilled work-

ers are single, and for them the wages received provide a comfortable living. But for the more than two thirds who are married, the wages received permit a scale of living technically described as "minimum for health and efficiency." Married skilled workers average 1.8 children per family; a fifth have no children, a fourth have three or more, and a third only one child. Some of the skilled trades are seasonal, while others are so dependent upon general purchasing power that they experience frequent and prolonged unemployment. For these and other reasons this group early felt the need of organization, and most of the skilled trades are highly unionized. They are generally regarded as a strong force in elections.

### *Semiskilled Workers*

This group has become increasingly important as the industrial process has become more mechanized. Its members are engaged in a wide variety of occupations, usually as operatives in the manufacturing, processing, and transportation of goods. If there is any "catch-all" to which people who have not made good elsewhere finally converge in order to make a living, it is probably this semiskilled group. But the typical male semiskilled worker begins his working career on the farm or on the manual-labor level and remains at the semiskilled status throughout his working life.

The schooling of semiskilled workers extends over a wide range. Some have had no schooling, while others have graduated from college. The typical semiskilled worker has had a term in high school.

A third of all male semiskilled workers are single, and the average income received by this group permits a minimum-comfort level of living. The average married semiskilled worker is able to eke out a bare subsistence for his family. Married semiskilled workers average 1.7 children per family; a fifth have no children, a fourth three or more, and over a third only one child. This level of labor is heavily weighted with young female workers, many of whom leave early to become home-keepers.

### *Unskilled Workers*

This level is not a "catch-all" for those who fail to make good in the more exacting and better-paid occupations. On the contrary, male workers who are so unfortunate as to perform unskilled labor as their means of livelihood exhibit more of the characteristics of caste than any other occupational group. Unskilled laborers come from the homes of unskilled laborers, farmers, or farm tenants in the great majority of cases. Only 12 per cent have descended from homes whose breadwinners were in the professional, clerical, or skilled levels. Most unskilled workers begin as unskilled laborers and never move above that level during their working careers.

The typical unskilled laborer is set apart from other workers by much less schooling, having had less than six years of elementary education. A fourth of the group have been to high school, of whom a few have graduated there and a very few have gone on to college.

Unskilled laborers are subject to more unemployment than any other level of labor and receive poorer average pay when working. The uncertainties of employment and income and the type of work available in construction, mining camps, or harvesting fields make marriage hazardous if not impossible for many workers. In the study reviewed here, 45 per cent were single. For these, wages were sufficient to provide a year-round standard at "bare subsistence," with an annual income of \$637. But the slightly more than half of all unskilled laborers who are married were compelled to live on the poverty level.

The married members of this occupational category are more prolific than any other group, averaging 2.9 children per family. Only a tenth have no children, while a half have three or more, and a seventh have only one child.

Inasmuch as the unskilled are the largest single occupational group, approximating 29 per cent of all workers in the United States in 1930, the implications of these circumstances for an electorate capable of dealing intelligently with the many complex problems of democratic self-government are obvious.

## 32 • The White-collar Worker

It is often said that the United States is a middle-class society. This does not mean that the majority of the people belong to the middle class, although most Americans think of themselves as middle class when they think in class terms at all. It means, rather, that the ideals and tone of our society—including the school—are largely determined by middle-class aspirations and values.

Many of us, however, have overlooked the fact that there has been a decided shift in the composition of the middle class. The middle class—as an economic group—has traditionally been defined as the independent professional, businessman, and farmer. In this sense our nation was at one time predominantly a middle-class society. It has been estimated that in 1820 approximately four-fifths of the white population of the United States made their living as independent professionals, shopkeepers, or farmers. A century later, only 15 percent of the American people, including those in agriculture and the professions, were self-employed.\* This decline of the old middle class, however, has been accompanied by the rapid growth of a new middle class of white-collar workers.

In the following selection, C. Wright Mills, a well-known sociologist whose *White Collar* is rapidly becoming a modern classic, undertakes to describe and analyze this important and growing segment of American society. It is not, he points out, a “single compact stratum” but “a pyramid within the old pyramid of society at large”—ranging from the office worker to the upper levels of management. In the passage quoted, Mills focuses his analysis primarily on the lower and larger echelons of the new middle class—salespeople and office workers.

Needless to say, the white-collar group is of very real importance to the educator, for it produces a large percentage of the pupils in the public schools. Further, many political analysts believe that it now holds the balance of political power in the nation. For both these reasons, the white-collar group is one which the educational profession must understand and to which it must address itself in its efforts to improve the public school and the status of the teaching profession.

In the early nineteenth century, although there are no exact figures, probably four fifths of the occupied population were self-employed enterprisers; by 1870, only about one third, and in 1940, only about one fifth, were still in this old middle class. Many of the remaining

\* Maurice Leven, H. G. Moulton, and Clark Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume*, The Brookings Institution, 1934, p. 31.

[From C. Wright Mills, *White Collar*, copyright 1951 by Oxford University Press, Inc., pp. 63-65, 70-74, 240-243, 249. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

four fifths of the people who now earn a living do so by working for the 2 or 3 per cent of the population who now own 40 or 50 per cent of the private property in the United States. Among these workers are the members of the new middle class, white-collar people on salary. For them, as for wage-workers, America has become a nation of employees for whom independent property is out of range. Labor markets, not control of property, determine their chances to receive income, exercise power, enjoy prestige, learn and use skills.

### *Occupational Change*

Of the three broad strata composing modern society, only the new middle class has steadily grown in proportion to the whole. Eighty years ago, there were three quarters of a million middle-class employees; by 1940, there were over twelve and a half million. In that period the old middle class increased 135 per cent; wage-workers, 255 per cent; new middle class, 1600 per cent.

The employees composing the new middle class do not make up one single compact stratum. They have not emerged on a single horizontal level, but have been shuffled out simultaneously on the several levels of modern society; they now form, as it were, a new pyramid within the old pyramid of society at large, rather than a horizontal layer. The great bulk of the new middle class are of the lower middle-income brackets, but regardless of how social stature is measured, types of white-collar men and women range from almost the top to almost the bottom of modern society.

The managerial stratum, subject to minor variations during these decades, has dropped slightly, from 14 to 10 per cent; the salaried professionals, displaying the same minor ups and downs, have dropped from 30 to 25 per cent of the new middle class. The major shifts in over-all composition have been in the relative decline of the sales group, occurring most sharply around 1900, from 44 to 25 per cent of the total new middle class; and the steady rise of the office workers, from 12 to

40 per cent. Today the three largest occupational groups in the white-collar stratum are schoolteachers, salespeople in and out of stores, and assorted office workers. These three form the white-collar mass:

White-collar occupations now engage well over half the members of the American middle class as a whole. Between 1870 and 1940, white-collar workers rose from 15 to 56 per cent of the middle brackets, while the old middle class declined from 85 to 44 per cent:

| THE MIDDLE CLASSES          | 1870        | 1940 |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------|
| <i>Old middle class</i>     | 85%         | 44%  |
| Farmers                     | 62          | 23   |
| Businessmen                 | 21          | 19   |
| Free professionals          | 2           | 2    |
| <i>New middle class</i>     | 15%         | 56%  |
| Managers                    | 2           | 6    |
| Salaried professionals      | 4           | 14   |
| Salespeople                 | 7           | 14   |
| Office workers              | 2           | 22   |
| <i>Total middle classes</i> | 100% • 100% |      |

Negatively, the transformation of the middle class is a shift from property to no-property; positively, it is a shift from property to a new axis of stratification, occupation. The nature and well being of the old middle class can best be sought in the condition of entrepreneurial property; of the new middle class, in the economics and sociology of occupations. The numerical decline of the older, independent sectors of the middle class is an incident in the centralization of property; the numerical rise of the newer salaried employees is due to the industrial mechanics by which the occupations composing the new middle class have arisen.

• • •

### *White-collar Pyramids*

Occupations, in terms of which we circumscribe the new middle class, involve several ways of ranking people. As specific activities, they entail various types and levels of *skill*,

and their exercise fulfils certain *functions* within an industrial division of labor. These are the skills and functions we have been examining statistically. As sources of income, occupations are connected with *class* position; and since they normally carry an expected quota of prestige, on and off the job, they are relevant to *status* position. They also involve certain degrees of *power* over other people, directly in terms of the job, and indirectly in other social areas. Occupations are thus tied to class, status, and power as well as to skill and function; to understand the occupations composing the new middle class, we must consider them in terms of each of these dimensions.

\* \* \*

Wage-workers in the factory and on the farm are on the propertyless bottom of the occupational structure, depending upon the equipment owned by others, earning wages for the time they spend at work. In terms of property, the white-collar people are *not* "in between Capital and Labor"; they are in exactly the same property-class position as the wage-workers. They have no direct financial tie to the means of production, no prime claim upon the proceeds from property. Like factory workers—and day laborers, for that matter—they work for those who do own such means of livelihood.

Yet if bookkeepers and coal miners, insurance agents and farm laborers, doctors in a clinic and crane operators in an open pit have this condition in common, certainly their class situations are not the same.

\* \* \*

In 1890, the average income of white-collar occupational groups was about double that of wage-workers. Before World War I, salaries were not so adversely affected by slumps as wages were but, on the contrary, they rather steadily advanced. Since World War I, however, salaries have been reacting to turns in the economic cycles more and more like wages, although still to a lesser extent. If wars

help wages more because of the greater flexibility of wages, slumps help salaries because of their greater inflexibility. Yet after each war era, salaries have never regained their previous advantage over wages. Each phase of the cycle, as well as the progressive rise of all income groups, has resulted in a narrowing of the income gap between wage-workers and white-collar employees.

In the middle 'thirties the three urban strata, entrepreneurs, white-collar, and wage-workers, formed a distinct scale with respect to median family income: the white-collar employees had a median income of \$1,896; the entrepreneurs, \$1,464; the urban wage-workers, \$1,175. Although the median income of white-collar workers was higher than that of the entrepreneurs, larger proportions of the entrepreneurs received both high-level and low-level incomes. The distribution of their income was spread more than that of the white-collar.

The wartime boom in incomes, in fact, spread the incomes of all occupational groups, but not evenly. The spread occurred mainly among urban entrepreneurs. As an income level, the old middle class in the city is becoming less an evenly graded income group, and more a collection of different strata, with a large proportion of lumpen-bourgeoisie who receive very low incomes, and a small, prosperous bourgeoisie with very high incomes.

In the late 'forties (1948) the median family income of all white-collar workers was \$4,000; that of all urban wage-workers, \$3,300. These averages, however, should not obscure the overlap of specific groups within each stratum: the lower white-collar people—sales-employees and office workers—earned almost the same as skilled workers and foremen, but more than semi-skilled urban wage-workers.

In terms of property, white-collar people are in the same position as wage-workers; in terms of occupational income, they are "somewhere in the middle." Once they were considerably above the wage-workers; they have become less so; in the middle of the century they still have an edge but the over-all



rise in incomes is making the new middle class a more homogeneous income group.

As with income, so with prestige; white-collar groups are differentiated socially, perhaps more decisively than wage-workers and entrepreneurs. Wage earners certainly do form an income pyramid and a prestige gradation, as do entrepreneurs and rentiers; but the new middle class, in terms of income and prestige, is a superimposed pyramid, reaching from almost the bottom of the first to almost the top of the second.

People in white-collar occupations claim higher prestige than wage-workers, and, as a general rule, can cash in their claims with wage-workers as well as with the anonymous public. This fact has been seized upon, with much justification, as the defining characteristic of the white-collar strata, and although there are definite indications in the United States of a decline in their prestige, still, on a nation-wide basis, the majority of even the lower white-collar employees—office workers and salespeople—enjoy a middling prestige.

\* \* \*

The power position of groups and of individuals typically depends upon factors of class, status, and occupation, often in intricate interrelation. Given occupations involve specific powers over other people in the actual course of work; but also outside the job area, by virtue of their relations to institutions of property as well as the typical income they afford, occupations lend power. Some white-collar occupations require the direct exercise of supervision over other white-collar and wage-workers, and many more are closely attached to this managerial cadre. White-collar employees are the assistants of authority; the power they exercise is a derived power, but they do exercise it.

\* \* \*

### *White-collar Prestige*

The prestige position of white-collar employees has been one of the most arguable points about them as strata, the major point to be explained by those who would locate

them in modern social structures. Although no one dimension of stratification can be adequate, the social esteem white-collar employees have successfully claimed is one of their important defining characteristics. In fact, their psychology can often be understood as the psychology of prestige striving. That it is often taken as their signal attribute probably reflects the effort, which we accept, to overcome the exclusively economic view of stratification; it also reflects the desire, which we reject, to encompass the entire group with a single slogan.

White-collar people's claims to prestige are expressed, as their label implies, by their style of appearance. Their occupations enable and require them to wear street clothes at work. Although they may be expected to dress somewhat somberly, still, their working attire is not a uniform, or distinct from clothing generally suitable for street wear. The standardization and mass production of fashionable clothing have wiped out many distinctions that were important up to the twentieth century, but they have not eliminated the distinctions still typical between white-collar and wage-worker. The wage-worker may wear standardized street clothes off the job, but the white-collar worker wears them on the job as well. This difference is revealed by the clothing budgets of wage-workers and white-collar people, especially of girls and women. After later adolescence, women working as clerks, compared with wage-working women of similar income, spend a good deal more on clothes; and the same is true of men, although to a lesser extent.

\* \* \*

Claims for prestige, however expressed, must be honored by others, and, in the end, must rest upon more or less widely acknowledged bases, which distinguish the people of one social stratum from others. The prestige of any stratum, of course, is based upon its mutually recognized relations with other strata.

\* \* \*

Salaried employees have been associated

with entrepreneurs, and later with higher-ups in the managerial cadre, and they have borrowed prestige from both. In the latter nineteenth century, the foreman, the sales-clerk, and the office man were widely viewed, and viewed themselves, as apprentices or assistants to old middle-class people. Drawing upon their future hopes to join these ranks, they were able to borrow the prestige of the people for whom they worked, and with whom they were in close, often personal, contact. White-collar people intermarried with members of the old middle class and enjoyed common social activities; in many cases the salaried man represented the entrepreneur to the public and was recruited from the same social levels—mainly, the old rural middle class. All this—descent, association, and expectation—made it possible for earlier salaried employees to borrow status from the old middle class.

Today, in the big city as well as small town, white-collar workers continue to borrow such prestige. It is true that in larger concerns personal contacts with old middle-class entrepreneurs have been superseded by impersonal contacts with the lower rungs of the new managerial cadre. Still, all white-collar people do not lack personal contact with employers; not all of them are employed in the big lay-out, which, in many areas, is as yet the model of the future more than of present reality. The general images of the white-collar people, in terms of which they are often able to cash in claims for prestige, are drawn from present reality. Moreover, even in the big hierarchies, white-collar people often have more contact—and usually feel that they do—with higher-ups than do factory workers.

The prestige cleavage between "the shop" and "the front office" often seems to exist quite independently of the low income and routine character of many front-office jobs and the high pay and skills of jobs in the shop. For orders and pay checks come from the office and are associated with it; and those who are somehow of it are endowed with some of the prestige that attends its function in the life of the wage-worker. The tendency

of white-collar people to borrow status from higher elements is so strong that it has carried over to all social contacts and features of the work-place.

- - -

Every basis on which the prestige claims of the bulk of the white-collar employees have historically rested has been declining in firmness and stability: the rationalization and downgrading of the work operations themselves and hence the lessening importance of education and experience in acquiring white-collar skills; the leveling down of white-collar and the raising of wage-worker incomes, so that the differences between them are decidedly less than they once were; the increased size of the white-collar labor market, as more people from lower ranks receive high-school educations, so that any monopoly of formal training adequate to these jobs is no longer possible; the decline in the proportion of people of immigrant origin and the consequent narrowing of nativity differences between white-collar and wage-worker; the increased participation of white-collar people, along with wage-workers, in unemployment; and the increased economic and public power of wage-workers because of their union strength, as compared with that of white-collar workers.

All these tendencies for white-collar occupations to sink in prestige rest upon the numerical enlargement of the white-collar strata and the increase in prestige which the wage-workers have enjoyed. If everybody belongs to the fraternity, nobody gets any prestige from belonging. As the white-collar strata have expanded they have included more off-spring of wage-worker origin; moreover, in so far as their prestige has rested upon their sharing the authority of those in charge of the enterprise, that authority has itself lost much of its prestige, having been successfully challenged at many points by unionized wage-workers.

Although trends should not be confused with accomplished facts, it is clear that many trends point to a "status proletarianization" of white-collar strata.

### 33 • The Impact of Welfare Levels on Persons

In general terms, both the introduction to this chapter and Selection 30 emphasized the influence of income and welfare levels on the lives of people. The following selection attempts to document and pinpoint this influence in three important areas—crime and delinquency, child development, and disease.

In the first passage constituting this selection, a noted criminologist and sociologist, the late E. H. Sutherland, reviews the research of the past few decades dealing with the relationship between welfare level and crime, especially juvenile delinquency. The second, prepared by the research staff of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, summarizes the findings of modern psychological research with respect to the influence of poverty on the personality and mental health of children and youth. In the third passage, Henry F. Sigerist, a distinguished physician especially noted for his work in medical history, depicts, again in terms of the research findings, the connection between poverty and disease.

#### Welfare Levels as a Factor in Crime and Delinquency

It has been evident for many decades that juvenile delinquents were much more numerous in some neighborhoods than in others. Shaw and his collaborators have amplified this information and organized it in relation to the general pattern of the American city. By an analysis of twelve series of statistics of juvenile delinquents in Chicago they reached the following conclusions: First, the rates of delinquency vary widely in different neighborhoods. No boys are arrested in some areas, while in others more than one fifth of the boys are arrested in one year. This variation has been found in each of fifteen cities which have been studied in this manner. Second, the rates are generally highest near the center of the city and decrease with the distance from the center of the city. Also, the rates are high near large industrial or

commercial sub-centers of the city and decrease with distance from those sub-centers. Third, the areas which have high rates of truancy also have high rates for all juvenile court cases, for all boys' court cases, and for all adult commitments to the county jail. The areas which have high rates for boy delinquencies also have high rates for girl delinquencies. Fourth, the areas which had high rates in 1930 had high rates, also, in 1900, although in the meantime the national composition of the population of the area had changed almost completely. When Germans and Swedes occupied an area near the center of the city their children had high rates of delinquency; when they were replaced by Polish, Italian, or other national groups, the juvenile delinquency rates in the area were essentially the same. Fifth, the delinquency

[From Edwin H. Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology*, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947, pp. 138-142, 144, 146. Reprinted by permission of J. B. Lippincott Co., Publishers. Footnotes omitted.]

rate of a particular national group such as German or Polish shows the same general tendency as the delinquency rate for the entire population, namely, to be high in the areas near the center of the city and low toward the outskirts of the city. The juvenile delinquency rate of Negroes on the South Side of Chicago decreases regularly by square mile areas from 19.4 per cent in the area adjoining the center of the city to 3.5 per cent in the area five miles from the center of the city.

This study has been criticized somewhat from the point of view of the reliability and organization of the data, but the conclusions are substantiated by studies in other localities by other authors. The question which has been raised most persistently, perhaps, is whether the arrests or juvenile court appearances do not give a biased measure of delinquencies because of the poverty of the families in the areas which are reported as having the highest delinquency rates. Wealth and social position, to be sure, do provide a certain degree of immunity against arrest. Also, certain national or religious groups maintain welfare agencies which take problem cases that would otherwise be referred to the police or to the juvenile court, while other national and religious groups have no agencies of this nature. Even when allowance is made for these variables, the concentration seems to remain, and this concentration is in accordance with the experiences of people who suffer from delinquencies.

\* \* \*

Two interpretations of the concentration of delinquents near the business and industrial centers of cities have been presented. The first is in terms of social disorganization in the neighborhood. The areas of concentration in American cities and especially in Chicago, where the problem has been studied most intensively, are areas of physical deterioration, congested population, decreasing population, economic dependency, rented homes, foreign and Negro population, adult criminality, and few institutions supported by the local residents. Lawlessness has become traditional; adult criminals are frequently seen and have

much prestige. Gangs have continued to exist, with changing personnel, for fifty years in some of these areas. At a particular time the gang may have a senior, junior, and midjet branch. The techniques, codes, and standards are transmitted from older to younger offenders. Junking, which is one of the early manifestations of theft, is encouraged or at least condoned by the parents, as is also theft from trucks and freight cars. Delinquencies begin here at an early age, and maturity in crime is reached at an early age. Boys fourteen or fifteen years of age steal automobiles and commit robberies with sawed-off shotguns, while in other areas delinquents of the same age are committing petty thefts of which the boys in the first area would be heartily ashamed. They not only acquire skill in the execution of crimes, but also prepare for avoidance or mitigation of penalties. They know the techniques of "fixing," of intimidating witnesses, of telling plausible stories in court, of appeals to sympathy. Consequently the pressures toward delinquency there are strong and constant.

At the same time the inhibiting influences are few and weak. Parent-teacher associations do not exist nor do other community organizations which are supported principally by the people of the neighborhood. The school, the settlement, and the church are supported by people who reside elsewhere, and these agencies are for the most part formal and external to the life of the neighborhood. Contact with outside society comes principally through the movies, the newspaper, the factory, the store, and the political machine. The areas of high delinquency rates are the ones which are generally described as "in the vest pocket" of the political leaders, for there is a striking similarity between delinquency maps and maps which show majorities for straight party candidates in elections. The residents of these neighborhoods probably know much better than do the members of the upper classes the details of the graft and dishonesty of the political machine which controls the city. Thus the American culture which they see is a culture of competition, grasping greed, deceit, graft, and immorality. They see prac-

tically nothing of the culture of co-operation, decency, and good taste, in which the boy in the older American home is immersed from infancy. Thus they come in contact with the disorganized and lawless neighborhood, and the dishonest public culture of America, but are isolated from the culture of the primary groups of the native American population.

The second interpretation has been favored by psychiatrists. The argument is made that the areas in which delinquency rates are high are low-rent areas, and that a population segregated on the basis of rent-paying ability involves a selection of the constitutionally inferior. They interpret the concentration of delinquents therefore in terms of segregation or selective migration. As a matter of fact those who reside in the areas of high delinquency rates at a particular time are of three types: recent immigrants, remnants of the earlier residential group, and failures in the better residential districts who have been forced to move back into the cheaper rent areas. A small study in Minneapolis indicates that persons who committed suicide or secured divorces in that city in 1925 had in 1920 lived about the average distance from the center of the city, but during the succeeding five years had moved inward slightly toward the center of the city while the general population had moved slightly outward from the center of the city. Taft found in Danville, Illinois, that though the residences of adult criminals were concentrated near the center of the city, very few of them had been reared in that area and that most of them had been reared in families in which other members, also, were delinquent. This, however, may mean merely that they had been reared in the delinquency areas of other cities.

In opposition to this interpretation of delinquency areas in terms of segregation, the most important evidence is Shaw's finding that the delinquency rate remained practically constant over a thirty-year period in spite of an almost complete change in the national composition of the population. This indicates that the delinquency rate is a function of the area rather than of the type of people who reside there. Moreover, Mrs. Young

has shown that when the Moloccans first settled in Los Angeles, only 5 per cent of their children appeared in the juvenile court; five years later 46 per cent, and after another decade 83 per cent of their children appeared in the juvenile court. The stock in this case remained constant but the opportunities for assimilation of the culture of the American city increased, and in their neighborhood this meant assimilation of delinquency and crime. Similarly it has been reported that when a national group, such as the Greeks or Mexicans, first settles in an area of deterioration, the children do not play with the children of other residents and do not become delinquent, but as contacts develop in five to ten years the delinquency rates increase.

\* \* \*

### *The Gang*

Among the influences in a neighborhood the mutual stimulation of children in association is one of the most important. Breckenridge and Abbott, Healy, Shaw, and others have shown that delinquencies are generally committed by two or more children acting together. Shaw and McKay found by a study of the juvenile court records in Chicago that 88.2 per cent of the boys had been engaged in delinquencies in company with others, and that 93.1 per cent of those engaged in stealing had been in company with others. The number of participants known to the juvenile court was two in 33.0 per cent of the cases, three in 30.9 per cent, four in 11.8 per cent, and more than four in 13.3 per cent. In the more delinquent areas the boys are organized for purposes of theft in definite working groups, which they call "cliques," in which the labor is definitely divided. One boy drives the car and is known as the "wheel man," a second carries the gun and perhaps he may have, also, the duty of crashing the window of the store, while a third has the principal responsibility for entering the store. The assignment of tasks, of course, varies with the type of theft but the "wheel man" is likely to have a somewhat permanent assignment.

\* \* \*

Poverty in the modern city customarily means segregation in low-rent areas, where people are isolated from many of the "cultural" influences and forced into contact with many degrading influences. It generally means a low social status, with little to lose, little to respect, and little to sustain efforts at self-advancement. It generally means bad housing conditions, poor health, and invidious comparisons in other physical and physio-

logical conditions. It may mean that both parents are away from home during most of the hours the children are awake, and are fatigued and irritable when at home. It generally means that the child is withdrawn from school at the earliest permissible age to enter an unskilled occupation which is not interesting or remunerative and which offers few opportunities for economic advancement.

### Income and Child Development

The influence of economic factors on health of personality has already been touched upon. It has been said that parents' child-rearing efforts are greatly facilitated if the parents feel that they are competent, respected persons who are sure of their place in society. The economic arrangements of the society play a large part in the promotion of such feelings in parents. Students of industrial psychology have discovered that worry and insecurity are detrimental to a worker's efficiency and productivity. Sociologists and psychologists are now reversing the question and are asking what effect poor job conditions have upon the home life of workers. So far only tentative answers have been secured but it looks as though fathers and employed mothers may carry over into home life dissatisfactions arising out of the way they are treated at work, with consequent detriment to parent-child relations.

More broadly considered, the general character of a society's economic arrangements reflects upon parents' ability to convey to children a sense of trust in the future and a feeling of dignity and worth in productive endeavor. Impersonality in work relations, jobs in which workers have no feeling of having an important part to play in bringing a task

to completion, insecurity of tenure and uncertainty as to rights, these and other characteristics of some types of modern employment adversely affect workers' feelings of confidence and importance. Health of personality in adulthood requires that the person feel that he is a person that matters and that life has dignity and meaning. If economic arrangements do not sustain these beliefs, children's personality development is likely to suffer.

More concretely, economic arrangements affect personality development through their effect upon family income. . . . Poor diet and poor physical health, which make personality development difficult, are attributable in part to lack of money. Poor parent-child relations may arise in part from marital disharmony that has an economic base. Children may develop feelings of inferiority and self-doubt because status in school and among age-mates depends in part upon the size of the family income and all that that implies. Parents and youth may come to think that the world is against them if hard work does not bring the promised rewards. These are but a few of the ways in which size of income may influence the adequacy of personality functioning. Actually, the connection between economics and psychology is a very

[From Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, *A Healthy Personality for Every Child*. Raleigh, N. C.: Health Publications Institute, Inc., 1951, pp. 43-48.

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complicated one, and one to which research workers have not yet paid anything like enough attention.

At the simplest level the connection between economic status and personality development is obvious. When poverty is extreme, children are so deprived of basic necessities that their functioning in all ways is greatly impaired. We like to think that such extremes of poverty do not exist in the United States but the fact cannot be denied when children die of starvation in migrant workers' camps. Beyond the simplest level the exact connection is hard to trace, for intellectual, emotional, and cultural factors are closely intertwined.

That health of personality is related to income level is testified to by numerous small studies in which children of various economic levels were compared with respect to social and emotional adjustment. Whether based on teachers' ratings or on psychological tests or on psychiatric examinations, the studies are almost unanimous in showing that children from low-income families are more likely to be maladjusted than those whose parents have more money.

Differences of this sort develop early and persist, if the evidence of a few studies is to be believed. Gesell and Lord, for example, report, on the basis of a small but carefully controlled investigation, that children from well-to-do homes excel those from homes of low income in "verbal, practical, and emotional abilities." Springer, studying about 800 children in grades four to seven in New York City, found that those from poor neighborhoods rated significantly higher in neurotic traits than did those who lived in middle-class neighborhoods. Thom and Johnson found that the majority of a series of well-adjusted high school students came from homes and neighborhoods that were rated good or excellent. Stagner, from a study of a small group of college students, came to the conclusion that lack of money fosters nervousness, moodiness, and depression. Terman, following into adult life a series of children of high intellectual endowment, discovered that those who rated highest in achievement were more

likely to have come from good homes, in the economic and educational sense, than those whose achievement was poor.

One of the few studies that did not immediately support these findings dealt with bright children in two schools in New York City. The investigator, Helen Davidson, found that the children of various income levels did not differ significantly in feelings of inferiority, introversion or extraversion, constriction or childishness, degree of social or personal adjustment, and emotional control. She points out, however, that her study was conducted in two unusually good private schools and that the disparities in income were not great. She concludes that when school and community situations are favorable bright children from economically disadvantaged homes can overcome some of the handicaps that low income imposes.

In considering the implications of Davidson's study, the question of selective factors might be raised. It seems probable that the kind of children such schools choose for admission and the kind of parents that permit their children to attend are out of the ordinary. Such families probably have traits that counteract some of the disadvantages of low income. Nevertheless, the study serves to emphasize the point that not all children are harmed by low income. If, however, the lack of disadvantage is largely limited to those who are bright, who have unusual school opportunities, and who have parents who are interested in their education, the position of the majority of children of low income is not good.

One final comment as to the influence of economic status on health of personality may be made, though it is one for which research data are lacking. This is the frequent observation of clinical workers that life in families of wealth and position often imposes heavy strains on children. As one psychiatrist put it informally, and probably exaggeratedly, "The children of Park Avenue are the most emotionally disadvantaged in New York." It appears to be true that, in this social class, children are under especial pressure for conformity and achievement and that they are,

moreover, often denied the close association with their parents and, as infants, the mother's solicitous care that are so important in personality formation. . . .

If, then, we take the bulk of evidence to indicate that in our society inadequate income probably does make health of personality more than usually difficult to achieve, we must next ask why this is. This is a difficult question to answer, both because the connections among the possible influential factors are hard to establish and because poverty itself is hard to define in monetary terms that are applicable to various times and conditions. The following analysis, accordingly, is frankly impressionistic, even when figures are cited.

To take the most obvious reasons first, we may review a few of the statistical findings regarding the adverse position in which inadequacies of family income place a child. Such studies show that, for children, life in low-income families is definitely more hazardous than in families of higher income. Infants in low-income families are less likely to survive the first year of life. Children in these families and their parents have more illnesses and accidents, and they are more likely to be undernourished. The children are more likely to have only one parent or to lose a parent through death, desertion, or other cause. Their mothers are more likely to work outside the home, leaving the children unsupervised. The homes themselves, as dwelling places, and the neighborhoods in which the children grow up are frequently not at all conducive to healthy development. It may well be that marital disharmony, at least of an overt variety, more frequently disrupts home life. And so on and so on, down the list of the familiar concomitants of poverty.

These statistical facts do not mean that every child in a low-income family is affected in these ways or that bad social conditions necessarily lead to poor performance in a social or psychological sense. They do represent, however, one category of reasons why economic insufficiency may handicap personality development.

A very different set of possible reasons is

found in the studies of a group of anthropologists and social psychologists interested in the American social class structure and its consequences for individual happiness. These research workers have come to the conclusion that in the United States social classes are much more clearly defined, in social and economic terms, than most people think—so much so, in fact, that they almost constitute sub-cultures within the larger American whole. Not all anthropologists agree with this interpretation of the research findings but it is fairly well accepted that the "lower-lower" class, as these investigators call it, has a way of life that sets its members apart from the rest of the community.

It is the cultural differences that are associated with extremely low incomes and the reaction of the middle-class part of the community to them that especially handicap the children of the "lower-lower" class in personality development. Studies appear to indicate that social classes operate in such a way as to keep people of different social classes apart. Since children learn their behavior standards, ideals, and values only from those with whom they have close contact, it follows that slum children, urban and rural, being excluded from contact with their "betters," learn only the slum way of life. This way of life is necessarily different from that of other social classes because the physical, economic, and social conditions to which it is a response are different. Accordingly, say these investigators, "the behavior which we regard as 'delinquent,' 'shiftless,' or 'unmotivated' in slum groups is usually a perfectly realistic, adaptive, and, in slum life, respectable response to reality."<sup>1</sup>

In school and in the community, children and youth of the "lower-lower" class are usually discriminated against by age-mates and teachers and are made to feel that they do not belong. Most of them leave school as soon as the law permits and drift into the poorest kinds of jobs. The research workers maintain

<sup>1</sup> W. Allison Davis, "Child Rearing in the Class Structure of America," *The Family in a Democratic Society*, Columbia University Press, 1949, pp. 57-58.



sembled on these families for the four-year period from 1929 to 1933. Their median income was \$1,650 in 1929 and \$870 in 1932. The results were extremely interesting. They can be summarized in the following points:

1. The rate of disabling illness was 48 per cent higher in families with no employed member in 1932 than in families having fully employed members.
2. The families that dropped from fairly comfortable circumstances to relief status showed a rate of disabling illness 73 per cent higher than that of families which remained in comfortable circumstances during the four years.
3. The families that dropped from comfortable to moderate circumstances showed a rate of disabling illness that was 10 per cent higher than that of families remaining in comfortable circumstances.
4. The families that dropped from moderate to poor circumstances had a rate of disabling illness 17 per cent higher than that of families remaining in moderate conditions.
5. The rate of disabling illness in families that dropped from comfortable to poor circumstances was 9 per cent higher than that of families that had always been poor.

All the evidence we have points to a very close relationship between the economic status of a population and the volume of illness which it carries. Even the most advanced countries have in their low income groups a large reservoir of disease.

A next step in the development is taken when a country succeeds in overcoming a disease entirely. In such a case the disease is, so to say, outlawed from the country but it continues to exist elsewhere, chiefly in the economically backward lands. This has happened with many communicable diseases.

Plague, which ceased to be a problem to the Western world from the 18th century on, still exists in Asia and Africa. The epidemic that broke out in Asia in 1896 did not reach Europe. From 1903 to 1921 ten million people

were killed by the plague in India alone. Even such a highly infectious disease affects the various socio-economic groups differently. In one of the Indian epidemics the deaths per 1,000,000 population were:

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Low-caste Hindus | 53.7 |
| Brahmins         | 20.7 |
| Mohammedans      | 13.7 |
| Eurasians        | 6.1  |
| Jews             | 5.2  |
| Parsees          | 4.6  |
| Europeans        | 0.8  |

Many other communicable diseases, such as cholera, yellow fever, and typhus, were in a similar way driven out of the economically advanced countries, but we are by no means rid of them. We continue to breed them in backward countries where at any time they can become a menace to us. A war, a revolution, any event that upsets the very subtle machinery of public health control, can lead to the violent resurgence of an epidemic that may spread without any regard for political boundaries. The last world war gave rise to epidemics such as the world has not seen since the Middle Ages. And today, in the winter of 1941-1942, typhus is already beginning to flare up on the eastern front.

The conclusions to be drawn from these facts are obvious. In every country disease must be attacked with all available means and where it is most prevalent, in the low income groups. And since the world has become very small as a result of the present means of communication, we must think and plan not merely on a national but on an international scale. There is a human solidarity in health matters that cannot be disregarded with impunity. Today, in spite of all medical progress, more than one billion people, chiefly in Asia and Africa, live under health conditions that are as bad as the worst the Western world ever experienced in the course of its history. Our task is therefore by no means solved. It calls not just for medical, but even more for widespread social and economic measures. Thus, the problem of public health is ultimately political.

### 34 • The Impact of Welfare Levels on Social, Economic, and Political Opinions

The impact of income, occupation, and welfare levels on the character of persons is not confined to the aspects of personality considered in the preceding selection. These levels also have a significant effect on attitude and opinion, influencing both the basic perspective of individuals and their views on specific questions.

In the past twenty-five years, considerable research has been undertaken on the relationship between economic position and social, political, and economic beliefs. The following selection consists of excerpts from three of the most significant of these studies. The first, by Hadley Cantril, a psychologist whose special interest is the psychology of social thought and action, describes the differences in social perspectives which grow out of differences in economic and social environment. Cantril's account stresses differentials other than the economic, but the economic differences are clearly present and influential in shaping the outlooks of the two persons whose cases he cites to illustrate his point.

The second passage, from the work of Richard Centers, a psychologist who has specialized in the psychology of economic classes, reports the results of a statistical study of the relationship between occupation and economic, social, and political opinions. In view of Mills' discussion of the position of the white-collar group (Selection 32), Centers' finding that this group, together with skilled workers, appears to be torn between two political points of view is especially interesting. In general, Centers' study confirms the hypothesis that this group now holds the balance of political power and may, if it clarifies its position, ultimately determine the political future of the nation.

The final passage, from the writings of Alfred W. Jones, whose *Life, Liberty and Property* has attracted wide attention among social scientists, describes the relationship between economic position and organizational membership, on the one hand, and conceptions of the rights of property, on the other hand, as Jones observed it in Akron, Ohio, following a series of important strikes in the rubber industry. It should be noted that in some cases organizational membership as well as economic position affect the attitudes expressed by the persons interviewed during the study. Moreover, the differences expressed during the Depression and following a period of bitter industrial conflict were probably considerably sharper than those which might be expressed in less difficult times. Even so, one of the most significant conclusions of Jones's study is that the trend toward a middle-of-the-road position on the matter of property rights seemed to be stronger than the trend toward cleavage—although both trends were present.

### Points of View Shaped by Welfare Levels

Suppose a boy, named David Green, is born into a middle-class family in a small Midwestern town. David's father is a general physician, a sympathetic, kind-hearted man whose duties thoroughly acquaint him with the lives of rich and poor, young and old. David's mother is a woman with a strong Christian background, preoccupied entirely with her home, family, and church work. Neither of David's parents is particularly interested in politics or in anything that is happening outside the local community. But they are both devoted to their children and anxious that their children become respectable citizens and, as they say, leave the world a better place than they found it.

David's parents are what their neighbors call "practicing Christians." Both by example and by teaching, they try to give their boy a profound respect for the rights of every individual. From them he learns that there are enormous differences in the opportunities people have in life. Some people, say his parents, are born into poor homes, have to begin work when they are young, and just never seem to get any breaks in life. Others are born with silver spoons in their mouths. Some are looked down upon because they are members of a minority race or religious group, others because they are only day laborers or housemaids. All this, say the Greens, is unjust. In their own small way they try to help the underprivileged of the community. What the state or government might do to help larger numbers of such people never enters their heads. They are just too busy with other things to be concerned with complex national or international problems. They are, however, well aware that they are living in a democracy, and they teach David that democracy is a form of government where all people are able to exercise certain political rights and to enjoy certain freedoms.

David leaves the small home town to go to college. There he learns about other forms of government, about the history of our own country, about political corruption, about tariffs and the interdependency of modern nations, about monopolies, strikes, crime, and the distribution of the national income. His world becomes greatly extended and he begins to appreciate the intricacies of social organization which his parents had never known. When he leaves college, he gets a job in a large city as a construction engineer. He marries and settles down.

When young Mr. Green talks with his friends, they find him enthusiastic about a proposal for a new public school to be erected in a poor section of the city. He is in favor of more government regulation of wages and hours, wants higher income taxes to finance public works programs, more liberal admission of colored students to the state university, and public ownership of utilities. Although some of his acquaintances call him a Red, people who know him realize that he thoroughly opposes communism as he sees it practiced in Russia, but that he hates fascism and all it stands for even more. They call him a *progressive*. He believes in democracy. But he believes that there is much yet to be done in this country if real democracy is to be achieved.

Now suppose another boy, named Philip Jenkins, is born into an upper-class home in a suburban district in the East. Philip's father is a corporation lawyer who commutes to his office five days a week. Mrs. Jenkins is fond of her family but leaves most of the care of the children to the maid while she plays her role in the community social life. When Philip is six years old he is sent to the local private school for boys. His mother wants him to grow up with children of the right sort. She does not like to think of his sitting in the same

school room with colored children or the boys and girls of ordinary workers. He is not allowed to play with the cook's little boy. Mrs. Jenkins feels quite keenly, and indirectly impresses on Philip, that he is better than most boys, deserves what she thinks is a better education, and should not have to bother with chores around the house.

As Philip grows up he hears his father talk about the restrictions the government is putting on men who have brains enough to amass large amounts of money. His father says that poor people are being spoiled, that they are happy the way they are, don't know any better, and only waste any extra money they have. It's no use to give them decent houses, the elder Jenkins contends, for they are ignorant, dirty, lazy, and won't bother to keep things in order. All they want is something for nothing. They don't seem to realize that a man who has spent four years in college and three more in law school has worked hard for his advantages. Democracy, Philip learns, is the best system of government, because it leaves people alone. The trouble now is, his father says, that the politicians in Washington won't let business men run things as they should be run.

Philip also goes to college. There he studies many of the things that David did. But somehow the problems of housing, crime, unemployment, and the utilization of natural resources seem quite foreign to him. He is concerned with these subjects as things to be passed, not as vital questions involving human welfare. Philip gets most out of the courses that teach him about the stock market and investment. Moreover, he keeps his eye open for friends whose fathers may help him get a good job when he graduates. Because he is an able and likable boy, he does land a promising job in the business offices of a large industry. He, too, marries and settles down.

When Philip Jenkins gets together with his business friends, he tries to figure out how he can help the company make more money, how he can speed up production, how he can cut overhead and labor costs. He considers labor unions only as necessary nuisances, opposes government taxes on excess profits,

wants to cut out of the public school system a number of courses that are of no practical value, and thinks that white people should be given preference to colored people when they apply for jobs in the factory. Some who know Jenkins call him a *reactionary* young business man, but he considers himself a liberal. He favors a certain amount of social security and thinks the CCC camps are splendid. He says he favors many objectives of the New Deal but does not like its methods. He is an ardent believer in the democratic form of government. He would hate to have to live in a fascist state, but still he thinks that would be a lesser evil than communism if a choice were forced upon him.

Here is a glimpse of the mental contexts of two not unusual men whom one might meet in modern American society. How can we best describe the content of their minds? It is not enough merely to say that Green and Jenkins have developed different attitudes. They have different attitudes to be sure, but some of their attitudes are toward specific and temporary affairs, such as the erection of a new public school; whereas other attitudes, such as that toward communism, seem broad by comparison. We suspect, too, that some of their attitudes are rather deep-seated, would be held through thick and thin, while others might be readily relinquished. Jenkins, for example, might change his attitude toward social security more readily than his attitude toward labor unions.

Attitudes, then, have various dimensions. Furthermore, the uncritical use of the term *attitude* obscures the relationships between essentially qualitatively different characteristics of mental life. Isn't there some important distinction as well as important connection, for example, between Green's childhood impression that some people get an unfortunate start in life because their parents are very poor and his favorable adult disposition toward wages and hours legislation? We need to describe the content of mental life in terms that will somehow throw light on cause-and-effect relationships.

An examination of the cases of David Green and Philip Jenkins, observation of everyday

social life, and what knowledge we have of the psychological structure of mind all help suggest that we must distinguish between three characteristics of mental context.

### *Standards of Judgment*

There were certain social norms and values in the environments of Green and Jenkins which were transmitted to these men by their parents. We recall that Green was taught that all people deserved an equal opportunity in life, but that by no means all people these days were actually provided equal opportunity. He learned that wealth was not a sign of any inherent superiority, that because a person was a Negro, a Jew, or a Catholic was no reason to lessen one's respect for him. Jenkins, on the other hand, was made to feel at a tender age that he was above others, that people in the lower classes tend to be ignorant, stupid, care-free, dirty, and callous to their physical environment.

Now all these notions of what is good and bad, right and wrong, superior and inferior are simply taken for granted by these two men. These notions are assumptions, presuppositions, unquestioned evaluations. They serve as definite points of anchorage, as standards of judgment which provide the psychological basis for interpretation. . . . They may be completely forgotten by the individual as he matures. But they leave their mark on the whole structure of his mental organization.

### *Frames of Reference*

If someone who knew both Green and Jenkins were asked what sort of men they were, he would probably answer, among other things, that Green was quite a liberal, progressive, democratic fellow and that Jenkins was conservative, almost reactionary, and tended to be snobbish about his position in life. Such characterizations as these, so frequently employed in everyday conversation, are possible only because Green and Jenkins have acquired general and consistent points of view. These points of view in turn are founded upon the whole pattern of assumptions, the standards of judgment, the two men acquired. They are as broad and general as the pattern of standards

upon which they are based. They are the organized framework, the structure which directs interpretations. These generalized points of view we shall call *frames of reference*.

### *Attitudes*

In addition to standards of judgment and frames of reference, the mental context of Green and Jenkins contains another important feature. When these men are asked their opinions regarding certain issues, when they must decide what they think about a certain labor union, a certain community housing project, a certain legislative proposal to raise more taxes, they have relatively little difficulty in making up their minds. Green would probably approve of the CIO while Jenkins would disapprove of it; Green would like to see an extension of the federal housing project, Jenkins would think it was interfering with private business; Green would contend that wealthy people should pay higher income taxes, Jenkins would argue that a sales tax on everyone would be fairer. These are interpretations of definite situations, evaluations which these men place on certain objects or proposals. These are their attitudes. They are derived from a general frame of reference. Unlike the frame of reference, the attitude may be general or specific depending upon the stimulus which evokes it. When Jenkins refuses the application for a job of a specific man because that man happens to be a Negro, he is exhibiting a specific attitude; when he says that Negroes should not be encouraged to enter institutions of higher learning, he is showing a somewhat more general attitude; when he says that he opposes fascism he reveals a still more general attitude. A frame of reference may be regarded as an attitude only when the stimulus itself is sufficiently general to evoke the whole frame.

The distinction between the three concepts—standard of judgment, frame of reference, and attitude—may be summed up with the example of David Green. He learns certain values and assumptions in early life: these become for him *standards of judgment*. On the basis of these he constructs or has constructed for him a pro-democratic point of view: this is a *frame of reference*. When specific situations

or proposals are seen by him to have some relationship to democracy and are evaluated ac-

cordingly, he has definite opinions: these are *attitudes*.

## Occupational Groups and Socioeconomic Opinions

Do persons of differing status and role in the economic order (*e.g.*, occupational strata) characteristically distinguish themselves from one another by the possession of differing points of view with respect to important political and economic issues?

\* \* \*

An examination of the data presented in Table 1 . . . reveals at once that such differences are indeed present. Whereas almost nine tenths—87 per cent—of large business owners and managers are either conservative or ultra conservative<sup>1</sup> in political and economic orientation, only about one fifth—21 per cent—of semi-skilled manual workers are so oriented. Again, although 55.5 per cent of large businessmen can be described as ultra conservative, only 2.5 per cent of unskilled workers can be found in this category. These differences are, furthermore, not confined to the urban strata alone, but are manifested between the rural occupational strata as well. The differences as far as ultra-conservatism is concerned are significant between any manual

<sup>1</sup> . . . A person is described as *ultra conservative* if five or more of his responses to the questions in the six-item C-R battery were in the conservative direction. An individual is classified as a plain *conservative* if three or more of his responses were conservative in character and there were at least two more such conservative responses than any possible number of radical answers. A person is defined as an *ultra radical* if five or more of his six answers were radical in nature. One is called simply a *radical* here if three or more of his replies were radical and outnumbered any possible conservative answers to the extent of two or more. All other persons are designated as *indeterminate*.

group and any business, professional or white collar group. Some differences are significant within the business, professional and white-collar set of categories; but though the gradation toward less ultra-conservatism is clearly continued within the manual groups, differences are not statistically significant within this set of strata.

The gradation in this occupational hierarchy from the conservative to the radical viewpoint is marked and for the most part in regular progression. The polarity of opinion is striking testimony to the antagonistic views that have been commonly supposed to exist. It is interesting, however, to note that whereas the top stratum has relatively few in it who fall within the indeterminate category, the lower groups contribute heavily to this type of response. Certainty of conviction, as it might be inferred from adherence to an "ultra" position, is much more lacking in these latter groups. While many have completely renounced the old norms and adopted a very radical stand, the proportions who merely waver at the undecided point or who at best might be described as nonconservative are large. It is much as if their faith in the old traditions might be badly shaken but still not replaced by complete certainty in denial of them or by adoption of new convictions. The indeterminate group . . . might be fairly accurately described as liberal, for it appears to mean such an intermediate position in terms of the validating criterion, voting behavior.

\* \* \*

The skilled and white collared from item to item, favor now one position, now another. The allegiance of such persons seems torn be-

[From Richard Centers, *The Psychology of Social Classes*, Princeton University Press, 1949, pp. 55-64. Some footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

TABLE 1.—ATTITUDE DIFFERENCES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRATA:  
CONSERVATISM-RADICALISM

|                                              | <i>N</i> | <i>Ultra-Conservative</i> | <i>Conservative</i> | <i>Indeterminate</i> | <i>Radical</i> | <i>Ultra-Rad.</i> |
|----------------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <i>National</i>                              | 1097     | 22.5%                     | 27.9%               | 27.3%                | 13.5%          | 8.8               |
| <i>Urban</i>                                 |          |                           |                     |                      |                |                   |
| All business, professional, and white collar | 430      | 35.8                      | 31.9                | 21.4                 | 7.0            | 3.9               |
| Large business                               | 54       | 55.5                      | 31.5                | 11.1                 | 0.0            | 1.9               |
| Professional                                 | 73       | 30.2                      | 39.7                | 19.2                 | 4.1            | 6.8               |
| Small business                               | 131      | 45.8                      | 28.2                | 17.6                 | 6.9            | 1.5               |
| White collar                                 | 172      | 24.4                      | 31.4                | 28.5                 | 10.5           | 5.2               |
| All urban manual                             | 414      | 7.5                       | 21.0                | 33.1                 | 22.7           | 15.7              |
| Skilled manual                               | 163      | 12.2                      | 26.4                | 34.4                 | 17.2           | 9.8               |
| Semi-skilled manual                          | 174      | 5.2                       | 16.1                | 29.3                 | 28.7           | 20.7              |
| Unskilled manual                             | 77       | 2.5                       | 20.8                | 39.0                 | 20.8           | 15.9              |
| <i>Rural</i>                                 |          |                           |                     |                      |                |                   |
| Farm owners and managers                     | 153      | 32.8                      | 35.9                | 24.8                 | 3.9            | 2.6               |
| Farm tenants and laborers                    | 69       | 11.7                      | 31.9                | 30.4                 | 18.8           | 7.2               |

TABLE 2.—ATTITUDE DIFFERENCES IN OCCUPATIONAL STRATA:  
WORKING PEOPLE'S POWER

QUESTION: Would you agree that everybody would be happier, more secure and more prosperous if the working people were given more power and influence in government, or would you say that we would all be better off if the working people had no more power than they have now?

|                                              | <i>N</i> | <i>Agree</i> | <i>No More</i> | <i>Don't Know</i> |
|----------------------------------------------|----------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <i>National</i>                              | 1092     | 47.7%        | 43.5%          | 8.8%              |
| <i>Urban</i>                                 |          |              |                |                   |
| All business, professional, and white collar | 427      | 37.2         | 58.1           | 4.7               |
| Large business                               | 54       | 24.1         | 74.1           | 1.8               |
| Professional                                 | 72       | 31.9         | 65.3           | 2.8               |
| Small business                               | 130      | 29.2         | 63.9           | 6.9               |
| White collar                                 | 171      | 49.7         | 45.6           | 4.7               |
| All urban manual                             | 413      | 61.0         | 28.3           | 10.7              |
| Skilled manual                               | 162      | 59.3         | 31.5           | 9.2               |
| Semi-skilled manual                          | 174      | 65.5         | 25.3           | 9.2               |
| Unskilled manual                             | 77       | 54.5         | 28.6           | 16.9              |
| <i>Rural</i>                                 |          |              |                |                   |
| Farm owners and managers                     | 153      | 35.3         | 53.6           | 11.1              |
| Farm tenants and laborers                    | 68       | 58.8         | 23.5           | 17.7              |

tween two poles or standards of beliefs. Nothing is really very surprising in this, of course, for their objective positions are not uniformly such as to ally them distinctly to either the proprietorial or the wage earning strata. Many white collar people are fairly low-paid employees and differ little economically from

is shown . . . to condition their attitudes, but foremen, who already, in a sense, are a part of management, and whose attitudes might be expected to be influenced by management's ideology.

The very striking differences with respect to the issue of "individualism *vs.* collectivism"

TABLE 3.—ATTITUDE DIFFERENCES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRATA:  
"INDIVIDUALISM *vs.* COLLECTIVISM"

QUESTION: Which one of these statements do you most agree with?

1. The most important job for the government is to make certain that there are good opportunities for each person to get ahead on his own.
2. The most important job for the government is to guarantee every person a decent and steady job and standard of living.

|                                                 | <i>N</i> | <i>Individ-<br/>ualist<br/>(1)</i> | <i>Collec-<br/>tivist<br/>(2)</i> | <i>Qualified<br/>Answer</i> | <i>Don't<br/>Know</i> |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>National</i>                                 | 1093     | 59.8%                              | 38.6%                             | 1.0%                        | 0.6%                  |
| <i>Urban</i>                                    |          |                                    |                                   |                             |                       |
| All business, professional,<br>and white collar | 430      | 74.9                               | 23.2                              | 1.4                         | 0.5                   |
| Large business                                  | 54       | 90.7                               | 7.4                               | 1.9                         | 0.0                   |
| Professional                                    | 73       | 76.7                               | 20.5                              | 2.8                         | 0.8                   |
| Small business                                  | 131      | 76.3                               | 22.1                              | 0.8                         | 0.0                   |
| White collar                                    | 172      | 68.0                               | 30.2                              | 1.2                         | 0.6                   |
| All manual workers                              | 411      | 39.2                               | 59.1                              | 0.7                         | 1.0                   |
| Skilled manual                                  | 160      | 51.8                               | 46.9                              | 1.3                         | 0.0                   |
| Semi-skilled manual                             | 174      | 30.5                               | 67.2                              | 0.6                         | 1.7                   |
| Unskilled                                       | 77       | 32.5                               | 66.2                              | 0.0                         | 1.3                   |
| <i>Rural</i>                                    |          |                                    |                                   |                             |                       |
| Farm owners and managers                        | 152      | 77.6                               | 21.7                              | 0.7                         | 0.0                   |
| Farm tenants and laborers                       | 69       | 55.1                               | 43.5                              | 0.0                         | 1.4                   |

higher paid manual wage earners, and for that reason may tend to have attitudes somewhat like theirs. Many others are highly paid with good prospects of rising to positions commanding still more economic advantages, and as such they would logically be expected to defend the status quo, that is, to be conservative in attitude. The skilled manual stratum is likewise a somewhat heterogeneous category with respect to objective status. It contains not only considerable numbers of independent craftsmen, whose very independence

represent a truly tremendous antagonism of view with respect to one of the oldest traditions of American life. This issue is regarded by many observers as the central one in all today's class strife. Whereas nine tenths of large business owners and managers and over three fourths of professional and small business men cling to the traditional belief that the role of government should be limited to the insuring of good opportunities for the individual's pursuit of his own economic destiny, only about three tenths of semi-skilled and un-



skilled workers profess such a conviction. Fully two thirds of the workmen in each of these strata display a socialist or collectivist view in their assertion that it is government's function to guarantee the citizen's economic sufficiency. Individualism is a crumbling faith.

As noted before, the division in belief, while clearly evident between the two rural strata, is not nearly so pronounced as that between the two major urban strata. The correlation coefficients . . . show substantial relationships

between higher occupational status and conservatism, as indicated by the total battery and by individual items, for both rural and urban groups. Yet it is apparent that the urban groups are in general much farther apart in belief than the rural. When, however, it comes to the most obvious "class" issue in the three shown here, that is, the question as to whether working people should have more power and influence in government, the division in the rural population is as great as that in the urban.

### Group Attitudes Toward Corporate Property

The investigator is bound to approach with considerable trepidation the drawing of conclusions from a type of study that has never before been attempted. There are not many generalizations that can be fully supported by the data from a single study. It needs, therefore, to be pointed out that the following statements are in varying degrees borne out by the evidence gathered in Akron, and that they range from those that we regard as well-substantiated by the data to those that can be advanced only tentatively, as hypotheses, pending further investigation. All of them, strictly speaking, can be applied only to Akron.

\* \* \*

1. The attitude toward corporate property of industrial executives and business leaders corresponds closely to their economic position.

The leaders of industry in Akron have prospered under the auspices of the corporate form of organization. They have advanced themselves to managerial positions of power and prestige and have acquired wealth in the form of corporate securities. It would have been a handicap to them, to say the least, if they had turned aside to show sympathy for

the other side in any of the conflict situations in which they found themselves.

\* \* \*

So it is not surprising that the scores of the eighteen Akron business leaders whom we interviewed tend to pile up at the 32 end of our scale, as follows:

| Scores        |                 |              |              |              |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|               | <i>Below 21</i> | <i>21-24</i> | <i>25-28</i> | <i>29-32</i> |
| <i>Number</i> | 0               | 2            | 6            | 10           |

2. Attitude toward corporate property corresponds to economic position fairly closely among the workers—especially those organized along industrial lines—*i.e.*, in the C.I.O.—but less clearly than among the business leaders.

The worker derives no such special benefit from the existence of corporate property as does the manager of industry. On the contrary, "labor" is popularly supposed to, and does actually, confront "capital" on a variety of issues such as we have described in our stories, and it is conceivable that the working man would invariably set himself against the property rights of corporations wherever they

come into conflict with the rights or interests of workers or poor people. We might expect that the economic position at least of manual workers would cause them to take a position exactly opposed to that of the leaders of industry.

As we have seen, there is a tendency for the scores of the 193 C.I.O. rubber workers in Akron to pile up at the lower end of our scale:

|                | <i>Scores</i> |     |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|----------------|---------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                | 0-3           | 4-7 | 8-11 | 12-15 | 16-19 | 20-23 | 24-27 | 28-32 | Total |
| <i>Number</i>  | 75            | 56  | 32   | 11    | 11    | 6     | 1     | 1     | 193   |
| <i>Percent</i> | 39            | 29  | 17   | 6     | 6     | 3     | ..    | ..    | 100   |

But whereas ten out of eighteen, or 56.3 percent, of the business leaders scored in the four highest places, no more than 75 out of 193 C.I.O. rubber workers, or 38.9 percent, scored in the four lowest places.

Turning to other workers, the difference is even more marked. The following represents the scores of a total of 275—comprising random samples of rubber workers who are not members of the C.I.O. (some of whom may be members of the Employee Associations); members of the A.F.L. (mostly from the building trades); W.P.A. manual workers; and rubber workers known to be members of the Employee Associations:

|               | <i>Scores</i> |     |      |       |       |       |       |       | <i>Average</i> |
|---------------|---------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
|               | 0-3           | 4-7 | 8-11 | 12-15 | 16-19 | 20-23 | 24-27 | 28-32 |                |
| 69 Non-C.I.O. | 11            | 12  | 9    | 10    | 12    | 5     | 5     | 5     | 12.6           |
| 59 A.F.L.     | 15            | 13  | 17   | 7     | 5     | 1     | 1     | .     | 8.0            |
| 110 W.P.A.    |               |     |      |       |       |       |       |       |                |
| Manual        | 36            | 25  | 20   | 12    | 8     | 4     | 5     | ..    | 7.8            |
| 37 Emp. Assn. | 1             | 3   | 5    | 5     | 9     | 5     | 4     | 5     | 17.6           |

• • •

3. The middle groups, taken as a whole, show a greater tendency to divergence in their attitude toward corporate property than

either the business leaders or the workers, with a predominant tendency to a moderate attitude, but with many individuals drawn toward the extremes. Other than immediately economic interests seem to play a considerable part in the divergence.

By middle groups we mean those whose position in industry is considered to be intermediate between that of the top management and the manual workers: or, if outside of big

industry, those independent merchants and producers whose status and wealth is intermediate. Thus we should include both the new and old middle classes, along with the lower-salaried employees, some of whom may not be so well paid as many manual workers. Such a category would admit all such groups as technicians, white collar workers, salespeople, professionals (with certain exceptions), small storekeepers, independent producers, etc.

The best composite result that we can get is by throwing together the scores of the five middle groups that we studied in Akron—24 chemists, 97 female office workers, 40

teachers, 26 ministers, and 52 small merchants. The scores of the 239 were distributed as follows:

|                | <i>Scores</i> |     |      |       |       |       |       |       |
|----------------|---------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                | 0-3           | 4-7 | 8-11 | 12-15 | 16-19 | 20-23 | 24-27 | 28-32 |
| <i>Number</i>  | 25            | 24  | 36   | 36    | 40    | 39    | 22    | 17    |
| <i>Percent</i> | 10            | 10  | 15   | 15    | 17    | 16    | 9     | 7     |

... These groups are not as bunched in the middle as our small sample of farmers. It is an easy conclusion that life in the city has exerted a pull upon them and has subjected some in each group to the influence of extreme ideas about corporate property. This is true both of those that are connected with big industry and of those independent of it.

• • •

4. The population as a whole, in its attitude toward corporate property, shows

marked trends, both toward sharp cleavage to the two extremes and toward intermediate conformity with a compromising morality, in which, however, the attitudes are considerably "to the left of center."

• • •

5. Even in Akron, with almost everything in its background making for cleavage, the trend toward conformity with the compromising position seems to be stronger than the trend toward cleavage.

### 35 • *Occupational Mobility in the United States*

The American people have always claimed, with considerable pride, that the United States is a land of opportunity, in which each person has a real chance to grow to the full stature of which he is innately capable. This belief in equality of opportunity was one of the major reasons for the establishment of a free public school.

The essential truth of this claim has been attested by the eagerness with which immigrants from other lands have sought admission to our country. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that there are fewer opportunities for upward mobility today than there were when land was free and resources were undeveloped. In appraising this position, it would be well to remember that in the early days of the nation every man worth his salt was able to achieve economic independence by opening a small shop or farm of his own. A few were even able to achieve a position of wealth and influence. Later, with the development of large corporations, the upper ranks of corporate management were often filled with able men who had risen from the bottom of the industrial ladder.

Against this background, we may turn to the following selection, by William F. Ogburn and Meyer Nimkoff, which summarizes the results of recent studies of occupational mobility in the United States. These authors conclude that, although there is still considerable mobility, most persons remain within the economic class into which they were born. Further, as of the outbreak of World War II, there seemed to be less upward mobility than in the past. Business leadership in particular is now being increasingly recruited from the ranks of the junior executives hired from the graduating classes of the colleges rather than of the men who have worked their way upward from the bottom of the occupational scale.

[From William F. Ogburn and Meyer Nimkoff, *Sociology*, 2d ed., Houghton Mifflin Co., 1950, pp. 147-148, 156-157. Footnotes and charts omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

The reader naturally has a special interest in the social structure of the United States and wishes to know what it shows in regard to social classes. Despite the democratic shibboleth that "all men are created free and equal," classes do exist in the United States. To stress the fact that half of all the presidents of the United States were of humble birth is only to emphasize the dramatic exceptions to a rule and not the rule itself. The rule is that the overwhelming majority of individuals remain in the classes into which they are born.

This conclusion is supported by an abundance of evidence on occupational succession in families. A sample study of 1242 persons comprising 7 per cent of the working population of San Jose, California, in 1930, showed that while there have been some shifts in the socio-economic organization of the community in the last few generations, the social-class situation has remained much the same. That is, there has been some shifting of jobs without shifting of class. The older occupational set-up of the community consisted largely of proprietors, skilled workers, and unskilled workers. Lately there has been a heavy flow of workers into professional positions and into the expanding clerical and semi-skilled occupations. If we examine the evidence more closely we find that of the sons of unskilled workers, 41.7 per cent followed in their fathers' footsteps; 16.5 per cent became semi-skilled workers; 13.7 per cent skilled workers; 13.7 per cent clerks; 10.3 per cent proprietors; and 4.1 per cent professional people. While recognizing here a considerable degree of mobility, we observe that most of the sons of unskilled workers remained in their fathers' social class.

The mobility for the country as a whole is doubtless much less than it is in this developing, progressive far-western community. After reviewing numerous studies, Sorokin concludes that despite considerable mobility most children continue their fathers' work or enter closely allied fields. An even larger number remain on the same occupational

level. That is, there is much more mobility between occupations on the same social level than between those of different levels. . . .

In what direction are social classes tending in the United States? Does the situation described represent something of a cultural lag? Gone are many of the social conditions that gave us open classes. There are now no new geographical frontiers; immigration has been checked; and in general a larger amount of capital is required to establish a new business. The Lynds report that in Middletown the chances of a worker's moving up to an executive or a managerial position were much smaller in 1935 than a decade before. Taussig and Joslyn find that American business leaders are being increasingly recruited from the upper classes. Sorokin also furnishes some suggestive data in a study of the economic starting point of two generations of American millionaires. His data . . . show that there is an increase in the hereditary transmission of economic status within the group studied. The percentage of millionaires who started their careers poor is twice as high in the deceased as in the living group, while the proportion of those who started rich is almost twice as high in the living as in the deceased group.

As to the situation in agriculture, statistics on land tenure go back for 55 years, during which time there has been a continuous and marked decrease in the proportion of operating owners and a corresponding increase in the proportion of tenants. While 25 per cent of all farmers were tenants in 1880, the number had grown to 42 per cent by 1935. Besides, the equity of operating owners is much less than these figures indicate. In some states, including a number settled under the homestead law only a little more than a generation ago, it is estimated that the equity of operating farmers in their lands is little more than one-fifth; landlord and mortgagors hold the rest.

A contrary trend in social classes in the United States is the decrease in those classes with lower social status and an increase in those with higher social status. If we may call

large occupational groups social classes, then the class lowest in status is that of unskilled labor. . . . The occupational groups with the highest rank are the professional persons and the proprietors. The unskilled workers were a much smaller proportion of those at work in 1940 than in 1910; while all the other high-ranked occupational groups existed in larger proportions in 1940 than in 1910, except the skilled workers whose proportion is unchanged. The white collar group, which is usually ranked in social status above skilled labor, has increased greatly.

The reasons for these shifts in the numbers

of the social classes are probably economic and technological. Machines, such as steam shovels, have taken away some of the work of the unskilled; some work of the skilled has also been taken, as, for instance, that usurped by the bottle-making machines. The machine tenders, whom we call semi-skilled, have thus increased. The clerks have increased because of the growth of trade and office work.

It also appears that the percentage of owners of their own businesses has decreased. These are in the main farmers and proprietors (excluding officials). More people are working for fewer employers.

### 36 • Class, Welfare Levels, and American Ideals

As we have previously observed, there is a serious question as to whether or not the existence of economic and status classes in our society is compatible with American ideals. Many have felt that the American ideal is a classless society in which each person's status and opportunities are determined solely by his own merits, without reference to the accident of birth. This feeling is reflected in the ambiguity which many Americans display when they talk about social class—denying the existence of classes in one breath and assuming the fact of classes almost in the next. The issue, of course, has been made sharper by the evidence, cited in the preceding selection, that there is less upward mobility now than there has been in the past. To some degree, our open class system appears to be growing more rigid, although there has certainly been more opportunity in the past few years than there was during the Depression.

In the following selection, Warner, Meeker, and Eells make clear their position on this issue. In common with a number of other students of society, they hold that classes are inevitable in any society, and that the existence of class in our country is not incompatible with American ideals, provided that these ideals are interpreted realistically. The principle that all men are created equal should be modified by the somewhat cynical phrase "but some are more equal than others." You may not agree with the conclusion of these authors in this respect—at least some of the editors of this book do not—but their statement does pose the issue. Confronted with facts which demonstrate

[From W. Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker, and Kenneth Eells, *Social Class in America*, Science Research Associates, Inc., 1949, pp. 3-7. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

the existence of economic and status classes, should American society and the public school accept these classes as inevitable in any case and try to make the best of the situation? Or should we undertake to build a classless society?

In the bright glow and warm presence of the American Dream all men are born free and equal. Everyone in the American Dream has the right, and often the duty, to try to succeed and to do his best to reach the top. Its two fundamental themes and propositions, that all of us are equal and that each of us has the right to the chance of reaching the top, are mutually contradictory, for if all men are equal there can be no top level to aim for, no bottom one to get away from; there can be no superior or inferior positions, but only one common level into which all Americans are born and in which all of them will spend their lives. We all know such perfect equality of position and opportunity does not exist. All Americans are not born into families of equal position: some are born into a rich man's aristocracy on the Gold Coast; some into the solid comfort of Suburbia's middle classes; and others into a mean existence among the slum families living on the wrong side of the tracks. It is common knowledge that the sons and daughters of the Gold Coasts, the Main Lines, and Park Avenues of America are more likely to receive recognition for their efforts than the children of the slums. The distance these fortunate young people travel to achieve success is shorter, and the route up easier, than the long hard pull necessary for the ambitious children of the less fortunate middle class. Though everyone has the common right to succeed, it is not an equal "right"; though there is equality of rank for some of us, there is not equality of rank for all of us.

When some men learn that *all* the American Dream does not fit *all* that is true about the realities of our life, they denounce the Dream and deny the truth of *any* of it. Fortunately, most of us are wiser and better adjusted to social reality; we recognize that, though it is called a Dream and though some

of it is false, by virtue of our firm belief in it we have made some of it true. Despite the presence of social hierarchies which place people at higher and lower levels in American communities, the principles of democracy do operate; the Christian dogma that all men are equal in the sight of God because He is our Father and we are His spiritual children, buttressed by the democratic faith in the equality of men and the insistence on their equal rights as citizens, is a powerful influence in the daily life of America.

From grade school on, we have learned to cite chapter and verse proving from the lives of many of the great men of American history that we can start at the bottom and climb to the highest peaks of achievement when we have a few brains and a will to do. Our mass magazines and newspapers print and reprint the legendary story of rags to riches and tell over and over again the Ellis-Island-to-Park-Avenue saga in the actual lives of contemporary successful immigrant men and women. From mere repetition, it might be thought the public would tire of the theme; the names are all that vary and the stories, like those of children, remain the same. But we never do tire of this theme, for it says what we need to know and what we want to hear.

Among people around us, we sometimes recognize men who have got ahead, who have been successfully upward-mobile, and who have reached levels of achievement beyond even the dreams of most men. Many Americans by their own success have learned that, for them, enough of the Dream is true to make all of it real. The examples from history, from the world around us, and from our own experience provide convincing evidence that, although full equality is absent, opportunity for advancement is present sufficiently to permit the rise of a few from the bottom and a still larger number from the middle to

the higher economic and social levels. Although we know the statement that everyone is equal but that some men are higher than others is contradictory, and although some of us smile or become angry when we hear that "all of us are equal but some are more equal than others," we still accept both parts of this proposition either by understressing one part of the proposition or by letting all of it go as a paradox we feel to be true.

Our society does an excellent job in giving us an explicit knowledge of, and good argument for, the equalitarian aspects of our life. We have much scholarly knowledge about the workings of democracy, but we have little scientific knowledge about the powerful presence of social status and how it works for good and evil in the lives of all of us. Yet to live successfully and adaptively in America, every one of us must adjust his life to each of these contradictions, not just one of them, and we must make the most of each. Our knowledge of the democratic aspects of America is learned directly as part of our social heritage, but our understanding of the principle of social status tends to be implicit and to be learned obliquely and through hard and sometimes bitter experience. The lives of many are destroyed because they do not understand the workings of social class.

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Our great state papers, the orations of great men, and the principles and pronouncements of politicians and statesmen tell us of the equality of all men. Each school boy learns and relearns it; but most of us are dependent upon experience and indirect statement to learn about "the wrong side of the Tracks," "the Gold Coast and the slums," and "the top and bottom of the social heap." We are proud of those facts of American life that fit the pattern we are taught, but somehow we are often ashamed of those equally important social facts which demonstrate the presence of social class. Consequently, we tend to deny them or, worse, denounce them and by so doing deny their existence and magically make them disappear from consciousness. We use such expressions as "the Century of the Common Man" to insist on our democratic

faith; but we know that, ordinarily, for Common Men to exist as a class, un-Common superior and inferior men must also exist. We know that every town or city in the country has its "Country Club set" and that this group usually lives on its Gold Coast, its Main Line, North Shore, or Nob Hill, and is the top of the community's social heap. Most of us know from novels such as those of Sinclair Lewis of the Main Streets that run through all our towns and cities, populated by Babbitts or, more explicitly stated, by "the substantial upper-middle class"; and by now, thanks to another group of novelists such as Erskine Caldwell, we know there is a low road, a Tobacco Road, that runs not only by the ramshackle houses of the poor whites of the South, but by the tarpaper shanties of the slums and river bottoms or Goat Hills of every town and city in the United States.

The "superior people" of Marquand's New England, "the North Shore crowd," divided into a top level of "old families" with a set of values and a way of life rated above those of the "new families," are matched by Philadelphia's "Main Line" families in Christopher Morley's *Kitty Foyle* and by similar groups in many other novels which report on the dominance of "the upper classes" in all regions of the United States. Reading them, together with similar novels reporting on Suburbia and Main Street for the middle classes and those on the Tobacco Roads and the city slums for the lower levels, gives one the understanding that throughout the towns and cities of America the inhabitants are divided into status levels which are ways of life with definite characteristics and values. Talking to and observing the people of these communities demonstrate that they, too, know how real these status levels are, and they prove it by agreeing among themselves about the levels and who belongs to them in their particular city.

Although well aware of social class, social scientists have been more concerned with their theories and with quarreling among themselves about what social class is than with studying its realities in the daily lives of the people. Until recently, they have lagged behind the novelists in investigating what

our classes are, how they operate in our social life, and what effect they have on our individual lives.

But recent scientific studies of social class in the several regions of the United States demonstrate that it is a major determinant of "individual decisions and social actions; that every major area of American life is directly and indirectly influenced by our class order; and that the major decisions of most individuals are partly controlled by it. To act in-

telligently and know consciously how this basic factor in American life affects us and our society, it is essential and necessary that we have an explicit understanding of what our class order is, how it works, and what it does to the lives and personalities who live in it. Our most democratic institutions, including our schools, churches, business organizations, government, and even our family life, are molded by its all-pervading and exceedingly subtle but powerful influence.

### SUMMARY

In this chapter we have been concerned not only with the facts concerning income and occupational differentials in the United States but also with the influence that these differentials—together with the social environments which usually accompany them—have on the opportunities and personality development of the individual and on our national ideals. In the last analysis, the chapter is a continuation of the study of social classes begun in Chapter 5. On the basis of research in the social sciences, we have found that our society is characterized by a dual hierarchy composed of closely interrelated but not identical gradations of social status and of economic class. We have found, also, that both of these hierarchies have considerable influence on the attitudes, beliefs, personality, and opportunities of the members of the several social classes.

It is, of course, impossible to reiterate in a brief summary all of the important facts, principles, and relationships which have been explored in this chapter. Certain crucial points, however, may be emphasized.

1. Although, in general, the American standard of living is the highest in the world today, there are marked differences in income among our people. A considerable number of families, indeed, receive an income that is too low to provide even a minimally "decent" standard of living. Since the 1930's, the marginal population (those with seriously inadequate incomes) has fallen from 33 percent to approximately 20 percent of the nation. But marginal families typically have more than their share of children. Further, we may recall that "poverty breeds poverty." Hence, the marginal or slum environment must be regarded as the locale of serious human erosion.

2. There has been an important shift in the composition of the middle class. To a marked degree, the white-collar worker has supplanted the independent businessman and farmer as the primary element in the middle class. This means that our middle class is increasingly dependent upon jobs rather than upon the direct ownership of property for its status and income. Moreover, there is some evidence that the largest segment of the white-collar group is currently suffering a *relative* loss in both prestige and income. The changed economic position of the new middle class is in some degree reflected in the ambivalent attitudes and opinions of the white-collar worker. The white-collar group is especially important to the educator, not only because a large proportion of pupils



come from this group, but also because it may well hold the balance of political power in the nation.

3. Income, and the social environment that usually accompanies it, has a decided influence on the welfare of the child. Obviously, poverty is not *the* cause of either disease or juvenile delinquency. But it is an important factor in the incidence of both these evils. Moreover, poverty and the social environment which it creates has a seriously detrimental effect on the mental health and personality of the growing child.

4. To a considerable extent, economic differentials are reflected in both the broad social perspectives and the opinions on specific issues of those who occupy different positions in the economic scale. It would be a mistake to conclude that occupation and income determine social, economic, and political beliefs, but they certainly are significant factors in the determination of these points of view.

5. Although there is still a considerable degree of upward mobility in the United States, there is some evidence that our status and economic classes are growing more rigid than they were in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, this tendency towards increasing rigidity in the social structure has, temporarily at least, been checked to some degree by the rapid expansion of the economy during and after World War II. Nevertheless, there is a growing tendency to select industrial and commercial leadership from the ranks of junior executives recruited from the colleges rather than from the lower levels of the occupational scale.

6. The existence of economic and status classes has posed a serious issue as to whether or not such classes are compatible with American ideals of equality. We shall return to this issue in Chapter 8, in our discussion of democracy. At the present time, however, we may observe that the issue raises at least three questions. (1) Are economic and status classes, with the different degrees of opportunity which they entail, inevitable in any society? (2) Assuming that classes are not inevitable, are they desirable? (3) If such classes are either inevitable or desirable, does the ideal of equality have any meaning at all? Different persons and groups will answer these questions differently. Warner, Meeker, and Eells assert that a hierarchy of social class is inevitable, if not desirable, and that, despite the existence of these classes, the ideal of equality, when it is interpreted realistically, is both valid and important. Further, they claim this ideal has had a very real influence on the actual structure of American society, for it has served to keep both our economic- and our status-class system more open than they would otherwise have been.

In Chapters 5 and 6 we have examined the ethnic-group, class, and welfare structure of American society largely from the standpoint of its effects on individuals, particularly children. These effects are important for teachers because they help to shape the character and personality of pupils in the schools. But the structure also has a direct influence on the conduct of the school as a social institution. In Chapter 7 we shall turn to a consideration of some of the more significant aspects of this influence.

## THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. What is the difference between the concept of social class and the concept of welfare level? How is each defined?

2. Suppose that occupational mobility were decreased to zero. What effect, if any, would this have upon stratification of society? Upon such ideas as equality, initiative, and opportunity?

3. In the occupational pyramid described by Anderson and Davidson, is occupation level or educational and social status the principal factor? How can you tell?

4. Who are the white-collar workers? Has their prestige increased or decreased? Why? What has brought about this change?

5. Examine the argument in support of the view that high incidence of crime, delinquency, and disease and adherence to certain socio-economic opinions are associated with low welfare levels. What assumptions are made? Are the supporting facts sufficient? How can you tell? If they are not sufficient, what additional facts are required?

1. Of the several studies dealing with social stratification from the point of view of income and economic power, Robert and Helen Lynd's *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition* are, perhaps, the best known. Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structure* analyzes the structure of community leadership and power in a large Southern city. Charles R. Walker's *American City* describes, in rather strong terms, the differences in attitudes, beliefs, and interests of different socio-economic groups during a period of economic conflict in Minneapolis. Alfred W. Jones, *Life, Liberty and Property*, Richard Centers, *The Psychology of Social Classes*, and Dewey Anderson and Percy E. Davidson, *Ballots and the Democratic Class Struggle*, explore these differences in much more moderate terms.

2. Studies of occupational mobility have usually reflected changes in the occupational pattern of a community as well as the rise and fall of individuals in the occupational scale. In a study by Natalie Rogoff entitled *Recent Trends in Occupational Mobility*, the occupational structure of the community is held constant, thus showing trends in mobility which occur independently. You may wish to compare occupational mobility in America with mobility in another country. One of the most interesting works bearing on this topic is *Social Mobility in Britain*, edited by D. V. Glass, Professor of Sociology, London School of Economics. This work deals with the whole problem of social mobility, of which occupation change is only a part. In a recent study by A. J. Joffe and R. O. Carleton entitled *Occupational Mobility in the United States, 1930-1960*, the occupational trends are projected to 1960.

3. Herbert A. Bloch, *Disorganization: Personal and Social*, and Mabel A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill, *Social Disorganization*, contain a wealth of information on the connection between economic and income classes and welfare levels. The relation of delinquency to economic classes is expressed in a stimulating way in Albert K. Cohen's *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*. The author not only shows how delinquency is related to certain subcultures, but also how these subcultures come into existence.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# The Impact of Class, Ethnic Groups, and Welfare Levels on the School



The fundamental issue raised by this chapter concerns equality of educational opportunity. At the heart of the democratic ideal is the concept of equality. The meaning of equality and its place in the democratic tradition will be explored in the next chapter. To the American people equality, in its practical application, has generally meant equality of opportunity. In the words of James Truslow Adams, the American dream has been the "dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement. . . . It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable. . . ."<sup>1</sup> So interpreted, equality is a necessary corollary of the basic democratic doctrine of the worth and dignity of the individual human being.

### EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The public school has been one of the major instruments through which we have sought to ensure equality of opportunity. One of the strongest arguments for the establishment of the free public school was that education would open wide the gateway to opportunity. Thus, in his annual report on education in 1848, Horace Mann asserted that

<sup>1</sup> James Truslow Adams, *The Epic of America*, Blue Ribbon Books, 1931, p. 404.

free public education is "beyond all other devises of human origin, the greatest equalizer of the conditions of man—the balance wheel of the social machinery."<sup>2</sup>

But if equality of opportunity is to be achieved by means of education, there must be equality of educational opportunity. In principle, this fact has long been recognized by the educational profession and by the American people. Again and again it has been used to support not only free public education itself but a wide variety of educational practices. Almost all the arguments in favor of federal aid for education are premised on the importance of equal educational opportunity. The argument for free textbooks and for state equalization funds are based on this principle. Roman Catholic leaders and educators have also employed this conception in their pleas for state aid to parochial schools.<sup>3</sup>

Educational leaders and the major teacher organizations have repeatedly affirmed their belief that all children, regardless of the wealth or status of their parents, are entitled to an equal chance to acquire an education suited to their individual needs and capacities. In 1947 the President's Commission on Higher Education declared, "Equal educational opportunity for all persons, to the maximum of their individual abilities and without regard to economic status, race, creed, color, sex, national origin or ancestry, is a major goal of American democracy."<sup>4</sup> Recently the Supreme Court of the United States itself reaffirmed the doctrine of equality of educational opportunity in its decision in the segregation cases.<sup>5</sup> Even those who defended segregation in the public schools recognized the validity of this doctrine, for they based their case on the "separate but equal" principle enunciated in 1896 by the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. As a fundamental principle, equality of educational opportunity has been widely recognized and affirmed. Yet it is not understood alike by everyone.

## THE BASIC MEANING OF "EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY"

What does "equal educational opportunity" mean? What does it mean to say that the opportunity of student A to get an education is equal to that of student B? Some people assert that the amount and kind of education an individual can acquire are dependent upon his native capacity to learn, and that since this capacity varies from one individual to another, it is meaningless to say that A's opportunity to learn is equal to B's. Whatever steps are taken to make it possible for A to learn, there will always be other individuals who can acquire either more or less knowledge than he does during a given time. In other words, people are by nature unequal in capacity to learn. Since this capacity is part of what is meant by the *chance* to acquire an education, people simply are not and cannot be equal in this respect.

<sup>2</sup> Horace Mann, "Annual Report on Education, 1848," *Life and Works of Horace Mann*, Vol. III, Walker, Fuller and Co., 1865-1868, pp. 668-669.

<sup>3</sup> See Selections 66 and 67 for a discussion of this issue.

<sup>4</sup> President's Commission on Higher Education, *Higher Education for American Democracy*, Vol. II, Government Printing Office, 1947, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> See Selection 48.

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This interpretation is logically correct. But it is irrelevant. For the expression "equality of educational opportunity," as it is used, refers not to native capacity but to the environmental circumstances that influence the growth and development of the individual. No reference to equal intellectual capacity or to any other native endowments is intended. The intended reference is the *chance* to get an education, of whatever amount and kind one's endowments make possible. It is the chance that is to be equalized.

Few things are more deeply ingrained in the sentiments of the American people than the belief in fair play, the conviction that every individual is entitled to play the "game of life" with as few handicaps as possible. Everyone has the right to an equal chance to win. No one should ask for more. If the conditions are fair, the best man wins. This belief in fair play is the heart of the principle of equal educational opportunity.

In the quest for an education, the fortunes of birth must be equalized. Those who are born into wealth and high social position have an advantage over those who are born poor and socially underprivileged, in the pursuit of education as in other areas. One of the reasons for establishing the public schools was to improve the disadvantageous position of the poor. Before the public schools were set up, the poor were educated in pauper schools. But rather than overcoming barriers due to parentage, these schools placed a stamp of inferiority upon the individual and his family. Despite the fact that they provided an opportunity for the poor to get an education, the pauper schools offended the sentiments of justice and fair play. In time the demand for an education at public expense, not as a charity but as a right of every individual, could no longer be resisted. Partly for this reason, the system of public schools came into existence.

The founding of the free public school meant that both the rich and the poor had, in one sense of the term, equal access to instruction in the knowledge and experience of the race. But educational opportunity was—and is—still far from equal. Some sections of the country are better able than other sections to support schools. In the poorer sections, many schools operate on short terms, with inadequate libraries, laboratories, and other instructional materials. The teachers are on the whole poorly trained. Schools in the wealthy sections, in contrast, function for longer periods each year and have superior facilities and teachers. The same inequalities are to be found between parts of a single state as well as between sections of the country. The opportunity to get an education is therefore related to the location of the individual, geographic and economic. Recognition of this fact has led to strenuous efforts to establish state equalization funds for the support of schools and a system of federal aid to education.⁶

INCOME AND EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Suppose the financial support of schools were equalized by both state and federal aid, and that, as a result, the schools of all communities were equally good. Could it be said that equal educational opportunity had thereby been attained? It could certainly be said that a closer approximation to equality of opportunity had been achieved. In

⁶ See Selection 96 for a discussion of this issue.

one sense it would have been completely established, for any one child would then have access to as good a school as any other child. Neither the lack of wealth and social prestige nor the poverty of the geographic location would affect his chance to attend a good school. But in another sense the opportunities would still be unequal. There would still be many children handicapped by the poverty of their parents.

Acquiring an education involves more than strict attendance at a good school. One must have books to study, paper and pencil to write with, suitable clothes to wear for physical training, and all the other things that a good school requires. The cost of these items may run to many dollars per year, depending upon the program of studies pursued. Many parents do not have this much money to spare. In consequence, their children cannot buy the materials they must have in order to take advantage of the school. Some schools have worked out ways of giving books and other supplies to underprivileged children, but parents as well as children often feel humiliated by these practices, and some of them refuse to accept such aid. It is difficult if not impossible to devise any plan of charity that will not brand the child and his family as inferior. For this reason, some schools have worked out rental systems to reduce the cost of instructional materials. Since all children pay the same rental fee, no one is stigmatized by the practice. But even this practice is inadequate, for it does not cover all the materials needed, and there are still some parents who find even the rental fee too great a burden. A few local school systems and some states provide from public funds, books and other instructional materials, which the student may borrow for a specified time.

But even the practice of providing free instructional materials does not fully equalize educational opportunity. A child who has defective eyes cannot study. It does him little service to give him books if he cannot see to read them. A child who is suffering from malnutrition or other physical defects will be unable to profit from the school as much as a child who has adequate medical care and proper food. And a child—especially a high-school boy or girl—whose clothing is inadequate may become so depressed that he will be unable to gain as much from the school as one who has no such worry. All these factors, and many others too numerous to mention, condition the individual's chances of getting an education.

It is easy to see that these aspects of the problem of equalizing educational opportunity are rooted in the economic system—in the distribution of the nation's wealth. For this reason, it is unlikely that school officials will ever attempt to equalize completely the opportunity to get an education, for such an attempt would soon involve the schools in economic and political activities far beyond their responsibility. But where does the responsibility of the school stop and that of the society begin? Strictly speaking, this question must be decided by the people. But the teaching profession needs some sort of guiding principle to indicate the domain of its responsibility. Such a principle has not been formulated. As a result, there is much division of opinion as to what the profession should recommend to the public. Should it recommend that the public provide all textbooks, musical instruments, and other instructional materials? What about health services? What about eyeglasses and hearing aids, school lunches, clothing? What about scholar-

ships and maintenance allowances for able students who wish to obtain a college education? Should all these things be provided to all children and youth, just as school buildings, libraries, and teachers are now provided, at public expense? This is a difficult question for a society committed to both economic individualism and the ideal of equal opportunity. Some members of the teaching profession hold that society should take steps to make all these things available through the school. Others are equally convinced that such a practice would profoundly alter the economy of the nation and hence should be condemned. To them equal educational opportunity can be realized only to a limited extent, though they would hold that extent to be extremely important. Whatever the contrasting views on this question, the school, in these respects, is moving in the direction of a greater and greater degree of equalization of opportunity.

THE SCHOOL PROGRAM AND EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

There are still other aspects of the problem of equality of educational opportunity. We have observed that the various status and income groups in the United States have different patterns of living and that, as a natural consequence, children and youth in these groups acquire different motivations and aspirations. In these circumstances, what type of educational program will provide full equality of educational opportunity? Should the school offer a single, unified program, based upon traditional, upper-class educational standards, to all children and youth? If this is done, then the school—provided that the economic barriers discussed earlier in this introduction were removed—would serve as a selective device by which able children from the lower socioeconomic groups could be prepared for upward mobility.⁷ But this type of educational program certainly would not meet the needs and interests of all American youth. It has, therefore, been rejected by many educational leaders. The President's Commission on Higher Education, for example, after affirming the principle of equality of educational opportunity, went on to say, "Equal opportunity for education does not mean equal or identical education for all individuals."⁸ In the words of a popular textbook, "The principle of equality as sameness is now generally agreed to be too much in conflict with the prior principle of individuality. . . . Education, we now say, equalizes when it matches equally well the variant needs, wants, and abilities of individuals."⁹

But how much diversity is desirable in educational programs? There are, as the authors quoted above recognize, serious objections to unlimited educational variety. Totally different educational programs for different socioeconomic groups could widen rather than mitigate social cleavage in the United States. Further, certain skills, attitudes, and knowledges are required of all responsible citizens by the demands of modern life.

⁷ Plato, of course, assigned such a function to education in *The Republic*. For a modern statement of this point of view, see Selection 86, by Warner, Havighurst, and Loeb.

⁸ President's Commission on Higher Education, *Higher Education for American Democracy*, Vol. II, Government Printing Office, 1947, p. 3.

⁹ M. H. Willing *et al.*, *Schools and Our Democratic Society*, Harper, 1951, p. 139.

For these reasons, many educators now favor a common core of required study, supplemented by a wide variety of elective courses designed to meet individual needs and interests. This issue, however, cannot be resolved here. Its resolution requires an examination of the role of the school in our society, a subject which we shall consider in Chapter 12. Our purpose here is to emphasize the fact that equality of educational opportunity poses curricular as well as financial problems.

SOCIOECONOMIC BIAS IN EDUCATION

Very few educational leaders would assert that the public schools now provide full equality of educational opportunity or even that we have attained the greatest degree of equality possible or desirable. Some educational leaders, indeed, have charged that there is strong middle- and upper-class bias in the educational program, in school activities, and in the beliefs and attitudes of the teachers. Undeniably, most teachers do belong to the middle class. Further, there is considerable evidence that school-board members are drawn largely from the upper socioeconomic levels. According to the research division of the National Education Association, proprietors, executives, and professionals account for 55 percent of city school-board members and, together with farmers (42 percent), 71 percent of non-city school-board members.¹⁰ Farmers (10 percent) and housewives (7 percent)—generally from middle- or upper-class families—constitute the next-largest category of city school-board members. “The remaining seven occupations, in order of frequency, are: technical and supervisory workers, general business managers, craftsmen and skilled workmen, clerical workers, unskilled laborers, salesmen, and protective and personal service.”¹¹

W. Lloyd Warner and his associates found, in their study of “Jonesville,” that the school board is largely controlled by the two upper classes.

Theoretically, any adult citizen who is a resident of the district may be a candidate for the school board. In practice, the members of the Board of Education come from the two upper classes and have to qualify under three strictly administered ground rules: first, only men are eligible; second, Catholics, Jews, Irish, and Democrats are informally disqualified; and third, the Board is “non-political.” To become a member of the Board a man has to be a Protestant, a Republican, a property owner, and a Rotarian or, at the very least, approved by the Rotarians. Rotarians are proud of the way they have controlled the selection of the Board for “more than twenty-five years.” . . .

This carefully controlled system for the selection of Board members has resulted in the election of middle-aged business and professional men from the top two classes who possess a highly developed sense of responsibility to these classes

¹⁰ Research Division, National Education Association, *Research Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 2, April 1946, p. 53.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

especially with respect to the preservation of economic interests, power, and prestige. The policies they have followed in the administration of the school system have reflected the community interests of their own social classes and, to a less extent, those of the little business and professional people in the lower-middle class. The relationship between their official positions as Board members and the education of approximately four-fifths of the children is not comprehended by either the Board members themselves or the rank and file of adults in the classes they represent.¹²

In the past, some labor leaders—generally strong advocates of the public school—have nevertheless asserted that the schools tend to favor the business point of view against labor. They have been supported in this contention by at least one business leader, Roger Babson, and by a distinguished American historian, Merle Curti.¹³ On the other hand, many conservative groups have charged that the schools are full of radical teachers and propaganda. Regardless of which group is justified in its claim, the fact that school-board members are drawn predominately from the upper socioeconomic group does not necessarily mean that they adhere to the views usually identified with the socioeconomic group to which they belong or that their actions as school-board members are governed by those views.

In any case, the bias, if any, in the public schools with which we are concerned in this chapter is not of this order. We are concerned, rather, with the charge that children from the lower socioeconomic groups do not have a fair chance to attend school beyond the elementary grades and that, when they do attend, they do not find the conduct and program of the school responsive to their interests and needs. To this allegation must be added the further charge that, in some respects, the school discriminates to an even greater extent against children from certain ethnic groups in our society.

The basic question, then, which the selections in this chapter should help you consider is the extent to which we have realized or failed to realize the ideal of equality of educational opportunity. In weighing this general question, the following more detailed questions may be useful:

1. To what degree and in what sense is the ideal of equality of educational opportunity a valid ideal for American public education?
2. To what extent are able young people from the lower socioeconomic groups precluded, for financial reasons, from getting a secondary and college education?
3. To what extent, if at all, is the school dominated by a middle-class orientation which seriously discriminates against the valid educational needs of the children from the lower socioeconomic groups?
4. Are segregated schools in fact and in principle a denial of equality of educational opportunity?

¹² W. Lloyd Warner and Associates, *Democracy in Jonesville*, Harper, 1941, pp. 194-195.

¹³ See Merle Curti, *The Social Ideals of American Educators*, Scribner, 1935, pp. 203-260.

The first two readings in this chapter are concerned primarily with the facts of school attendance. Selection 37, by Harold Hand, indicates the number, sex, academic standing, and economic status of those who leave school before completing the twelfth grade. The first part of Selection 38, from W. Lloyd Warner's study of "Jonesville," describes the class status of the adolescents in "Jonesville" who had left school before being graduated from the high school. The second part, by Raymond A. Mulligan, is a survey of some recent studies dealing with the relationship between socioeconomic status and college attendance.

The next group, Selections 39, 40, and 41, deals with various aspects of child development in relation to social class. Allison Davis, in Selection 39, describes and illustrates differences in the pattern of child rearing in lower-middle- and lower-class families. Selection 40, from Celia B. Stendler's *Children of Brastown*, depicts the stages through which children usually pass in becoming aware of class distinctions. In Selection 41, Allison Davis analyzes the motivational structure built into children by the lower-class environment and indicates something of the importance of this structure for the school.

The third group of readings, Selections 42 through 45, is concerned with the question of middle-class bias in the school. W. Lloyd Warner, in Selection 42, emphasizes the middle-class origin and orientation of the teacher. Selection 43, by August Hollingshead, describes the class discrimination in the curriculum, in academic rewards, including grades, and in school activities, as revealed in his study of the schools of Elmtown. Roger Barker and his colleagues, on the other hand, report in Selection 44 that they found no class bias in the "Midwest" school. In the final reading in this group (Selection 45), Allison Davis undertakes to show that most intelligence tests discriminate against lower-class children by including a large number of test items that involve words and experiences familiar to middle- and upper-class children but not to lower-class children.

Selection 46, again by Allison Davis, stresses the importance of curriculum reforms designed, in part, to include in the school program a range of mental-skill problems that will challenge the interests and abilities of lower-class children. Davis contends also that the present curriculum is too narrow to fully develop the interests and capacities of even middle- and upper-class children.

Selections 47 and 48 deal with the problem of segregated schools. Gunnar Myrdal, in Selection 47, points out the discrimination against Negro children which has been associated with segregated schools. Selection 48, from the Supreme Court decision in the segregation cases, declares that segregation, in and of itself, violates the American ideal of equality and specifically, of equality of educational opportunity. In Selection 49, Gerhart Sacnger depicts some of the methods which the school might use in classroom instruction designed to reduce or eliminate race and ethnic-group prejudices.

37 • Who Drops Out of School?

The American people have not only established public schools; they have also enacted compulsory-school-attendance laws. These laws reflect the concern of the public, as well as of the educational profession, that our children and youth remain in school until they have completed at least the twelfth grade. Nevertheless, a good many adolescents do drop out of school. Indeed, it has been estimated that nearly half the youth now in high school will leave school before graduation. Many of these young people—according to one study, a fifth of the eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds, a third of the sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds, and half of the fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds—have difficulty in finding or keeping a job.* Moreover, the occupations of those who do obtain employment are generally low-paying, with very little chance of advancement.

In the following selection, Harold C. Hand, a well-known student of secondary education, who has long been interested in the adaptation of the school curriculum to the needs of youth, reports an investigation of the holding power of a selected sample of Illinois high schools outside the city of Chicago. The study shows, first, that schools vary widely in their holding power; secondly, that 78 percent of the dropouts had grades that would have placed them in the lowest quarter of their class; and, thirdly, that 72 percent of those who left school before graduation came from low-income classes. Hand concludes that the curriculum must be modified so that these young people will have a reasonable opportunity to succeed in educational tasks which will prove profitable to them and to the public.

At some point in your study, you will want to consider the positions taken by Hand and by Davis (Selection 46) in connection with the various conceptions of the social function of the school presented in Chapter 12. In the following selection Hand raises an important issue, one that is currently the subject of sharp disagreement. Should the public school, below the college level, adapt its educational program to the interests, needs, and abilities of the student? Or is there a specific content that must be taught regardless of the student's abilities and desires?

The data for this study were derived from school records in 76 institutions variously located in all the principal regions of Illinois outside the city of Chicago. The magnitude

* Jack Harrison Pollack, "What Happens When Kids Quit School?" *Parents' Magazine*, 27 (Aug. 1952): 44-45.

[From Harold C. Hand, *Principal Findings of the 1947-1948 Basic Studies*, Illinois Secondary School Curriculum Program, Bulletin No. 2, Springfield: State Department of Public Instruction, 1949, pp. 12-15. Some footnotes omitted. Used by permission.]

of the total task of analyzing the data was so great, however, that the findings in only 22 four-year high schools were available at the time this bulletin was written (December, 1948).

The basic plan of the investigation¹ was a very simple one. The investigation was begun by taking all the pupils who had entered the school as freshmen four school years prior to the graduation date of 1947; i.e., all the entering pupils for the school year 1943-1944. Then, from among this totality of entering students, only the records of those who were known to have dropped out of school were included in the study. Pupils who had died or who had transferred to another school, or those whose families had moved to another community, were *not* regarded as drop outs.

* * *

The principal findings yielded by the data analyzed to date have been summarized in the following tables.

In Table 1 are reported the proportions of the data population who withdrew from school. The findings ranged widely from less

TABLE 1

FOR EVERY TEN PUPILS WHO GRADUATED,
HOW MANY DROPPED OUT?

(Data derived from 22 four-year schools)

Measure	Drop Outs per Each 10 Graduates
Lowest	0.6
Q1	1.7
Median	2.7
Q3	3.9
Highest	8.0

than one to as many as 8 withdrawals for each 10 of the original pupil group who con-

tinued on to graduation. For every 10 who received their diplomas, slightly fewer than 3 pupils dropped out in half of the 22 schools.

That this wide variation in the holding power of the schools must be accounted for on the basis of factors other than school size is clearly implied by the data of Table 2. For both sexes, the holding power of the five largest and of the five smallest schools in the study was very closely the same.

TABLE 2

THE STORY BY SCHOOL SIZE

(Data derived from 22 four-year schools)

School Size	Drop Outs per Each 10 Graduates	
	Boys	Girls
Five largest schools	3.3	2.2
Five smallest schools	3.2	2.5

Of all the pupils who withdrew from high school at any time during the four-year period, slightly over half (54 per cent) were boys (See row 5 of Table 3). This relationship obtained at all school levels except Grade 11. In general, therefore, the schools are seen to have made themselves appreciably less durably attractive to boys than to girls.

TABLE 3

PER CENT OF PUPILS OF EACH SEX WHO
WITHDREW AT EACH GRADE LEVEL

(Data derived from 22 four-year schools)

Grade	Boys	Girls	Total
9	53%	47%	100%
10	58	42	100
11	46	54	100
12	59	41	100
Total	54	46	100

It seems entirely reasonable to assume that any normal person would seek to escape as soon as possible from any situation in which he persistently found himself branded as an incompetent. This hypothesis appears to be borne out by the data of Table 4. There it

¹ Charles M. Allen, *How to Conduct the Holding Power Study*. Circular Series A. No. 51. Illinois Secondary School Curriculum Program Bulletin No. 3. Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, Illinois. May, 1949.

will be observed that approximately 4 out of every 5 withdrawing pupils would presumably have been near the bottom of their class had they persisted in school. Persistently dubbing as inferior the children who by virtue of the accident of birth in an I.Q. sense happen not to be capable of doing "average work" is to make operative the reasonably certain recipe for eliminating these boys and girls from the institution which the public

both to them and to the investing public. Put in other words, our standards of what constitutes failure or success in school are seriously in need of re-examination.

We turn now to the last of the principal findings of the Holding Power Study. This finding makes it apparent that, judged by the present sample, our schools have a long way to go before we can honestly say that they are serving all the children of all the people. As the data of Table 5 make only too clear, it is overwhelmingly the children from the lower income families who withdrew from high school. Scarcely more than 50 per cent of the adult population is engaged in occupations here subsumed under the category of labor, yet 72 per cent of the drop outs in the schools studied come from the families of such workers. Apparently, the statement by Howard M. Bell that "The strongest single factor in determining how far a youth goes in his school is the occupation of his father" also holds for Illinois. What this situation in secondary education means in long-time welfare terms has also been realistically stated by Bell.

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF WITHDRAWALS WHOSE
PROJECTED SCHOOL GRADES WOULD HAVE
PLACED THEM IN EACH OF CERTAIN
QUARTERS IN THEIR GRADUATING CLASS

(Data derived from 22 four-year schools)

<i>Projected Rank in Graduating Class</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Lowest quarter	84%	71%	78%
Second quarter	11	20	15
Third quarter	4	6	5
Highest quarter	1	3	2

supports out of general taxation for purposes of making *all* children more adequate members of the community.

Apparently, the unfortunate consequences noted in the New York Regents Study are also operative in Illinois. In the study cited it was found that "On the average, the less competent a pupil has shown himself to be in meeting school tasks, the more quickly he is released to face adult problems. Those who will be least able to acquire socially useful habits, information, and points of view without formal instruction are those to whom the school has given least attention."²

That this condition cannot possibly make sense is completely self-evident. Obviously, the curriculum must be so modified that *all* children have a reasonable opportunity to succeed in tasks which will prove rewarding

² R. E. Eckert and T. O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1938, pp. 67-68.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF WITHDRAWING PUPILS WITH
PARENTS IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

(Data derived from 22 four-year schools)

<i>Occupational Group</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Labor	69%	75%	72%
All others	31	25	28
Total	100	100	100

His observations run thus: (1) the grade attained in school by an individual determines the type of job he secures, (2) the type of job he secures determines the income he receives, (3) the amount of income he receives determines the grade in school to be attained by his children, (4) which, in turn, indicates the types of jobs they will get, the amount of income they will receive, the length of time their children will remain in school, and so on and on.

38 • The Effect of Class on School Attendance

Selection 38 continues the analysis, begun in the preceding reading, of the relationship between socioeconomic status and school attendance. The first of the two passages in this selection, by W. Lloyd Warner and his associates, shows that in "Jonesville" all the young people of school age coming from the upper and the upper-middle classes were in school. On the other hand, more than 88 percent of the youth of high-school age belonging to the lower-lower class had quit school. Warner concludes that there is definitely a relationship between class membership and school attendance. Moreover, he believes that it is a two-way relationship, in which the lower class tends to reject the school and the school, to reject the lower class.

In the second passage, Raymond A. Mulligan reviews a number of studies of the relationship between socioeconomic status and college attendance. As expected, these studies show that the upper classes are overrepresented and the lower classes heavily underrepresented in college student bodies. Lack of intelligence and lack of interest on the part of young people from the lower classes may account in part for this phenomenon. But Mulligan presents evidence to support his own view that ambitious lower-class students are often stymied by severe economic and social handicaps.

Social Class and Secondary-school Attendance

Who was in school and who was out of school? Was there any relationship between age or place of residence and enrollment? What are the conditions under which some students persist in school and others withdraw?

It is a common belief in Jonesville that country children quit school oftener than town youngsters, but the facts refute this belief. Almost 75 percent of the 735 adolescents of high school age live in town and 25 percent in the country. The 390 who finished high school in 1941-42 were in almost the same proportion as the total: 75.9 percent lived in Jonesville and 24.1 percent in the rural area.

A second local myth is built around compulsory attendance. It is believed the authorities "make the children go to school" until they are sixteen years of age. Seventy-four percent of the 345 adolescents out of school in the spring of 1942 had withdrawn from school before they were sixteen years of age.

The people of Jonesville, both within and outside the school system, are unaware of the number or the proportion of young people of high school age who are not in school. The superintendent knew there were "some"; the president of the Board stated, "Certainly, there are a few youngsters not in school, but you will find that in any town."

Analysis of the data showed a high correla-

[From W. Lloyd Warner and Associates, *Democracy in Jonesville*, Harper and Bros., 1949, pp. 205-206. Reprinted by permission.]

tion between class position and continuance in, or dropping out of, school. All the young people in the classes Above the Common Man Level were in school; over nine out of ten in the lower-middle class; six out of ten in the upper-lower class; but only one out of ten in the lower-lower class.

We must conclude that the class to which a child belongs is a significant factor in his relations to the high school.

We believe this is a two-way relationship. On the one hand, the class culture of the child provides him with certain beliefs and values about the high school and what it has to offer. On the other hand, the institutional values of the school, represented by the Board of Education, the professional administrators and teachers, as well as the students, develop differential attitudes toward persons in different

positions in the social structure which act as attractive or repellent agents to keep the adolescent in, or to force him out of, school.

TABLE 1
SOCIAL CLASS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

<i>Social Class</i>	<i>In School</i>		<i>Out of School</i>	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
U	4*	100.0
UM	31	100.0
LM	146	92.4	12	7.6
UL	183	58.7	129	41.3
LL	26	11.3	204	88.7
	390	53.1	345	46.9

* Hereafter, the four cases in the upper class are combined with the 31 in the upper-middle class.

Class, Income, and College Attendance

In the last thirty years, several studies have been made of the social origins of students attending public and private junior colleges, liberal arts colleges, teachers' colleges, and state universities. However, one has to exercise caution in making generalizations from these studies, for: (1) they were made over a wide range of years; (2) the methods used for the collection of data were not uniform; (3) in most cases a standard scale for the socio-economic grouping of gainful workers was not available or used; and (4) the institutions involved and their community settings differed as to type and size. Nevertheless, in reviewing these studies one salient factor stands out. The lower, or blue-collar, classes (skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled) were found to be greatly under-represented in all institutions of higher learning.

One of the earliest of these studies was made by Koos in 1921-1922. He found that students

from the upper classes were heavily over-represented and the lower classes under-represented in sixteen public junior colleges, seven private junior colleges, three liberal arts colleges, one state university, and one private university.

A study of all pupils in regular attendance at the Lyons Township High School, La Grange, Illinois, from September, 1923 to June, 1925, was made by Towell. Although the official records of the high school showed that 70.0 per cent of the graduates attended college the upper classes were over-represented and the lower classes under-represented. In fact, unskilled labor and the personal- and public-service groups had no representatives in college.

Reynolds in a study of fifty-five public and private junior colleges, liberal arts colleges, and state universities found that approximately three-fourths of the students' fathers

were engaged in proprietary, agricultural, professional, and managerial service. As in the studies mentioned above the lower classes were poorly represented.

Potthoff's study of students who entered the University of Chicago as freshmen in October, 1924, is much more manageable in scope. He was interested in determining the extent to which the various occupational groups comprising the population of Chicago were represented among the students whose homes were in that city.

This investigation revealed that the upper classes combined had more than four times as many representatives in the university's freshman enrollment than the lower classes, although the latter combination was twice as numerous in the general population of Chicago as the former. Approximately 42 per cent of the students came from the proprietary class, a group which comprised 7.8 per cent of the general population. The professional class was represented by 18.6 per cent of the freshman students, and made up only 5.1 per cent of the city's population. Whereas 16.1 per cent of Chicago's population fell into the unskilled labor group only one student came from this class.

In a study of 1,080 women students in fifteen teachers' colleges it was found that the parents of these students were largely farmers and business men. Approximately 15 per cent of the students' fathers were skilled workers and only 4 per cent were unskilled laborers. In this study the lower classes made a relatively better showing, but still they were poorly represented in proportion to their numbers in the general population.

More recently in two studies of women students at Indiana University, Mueller and Mueller found a direct relationship between social class and higher education. In their study of 1944-45 they found that whereas the professional classes represented approximately 4.7 per cent of the state population, 17.7 per cent of the women students were affiliated with that class. The professional classes thus had an index of representation of 377. On the other extreme the unskilled group, representing 20 per cent of the state population and 3.4

per cent of the women students, only filled approximately 17 per cent of its theoretical quota. The data in their earlier study show almost identical relationships.

A study of the male students at Indiana University in 1947 found the professional group contributing the largest proportion of students, 13.9 per cent, while making up only 4.2 per cent of the state population, and the semi-skilled group the smallest, 6.2 per cent, while representing 19.4 per cent of the state population. The white collar group (professional, business, and clerical) sent 54.7 per cent of the students to the university, while representing only 24.4 per cent of the state population, the blue-collar group (skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled) contributed 30.5 per cent of the students, while making up 60.1 per cent of the students, and the farmers (owners and tenants) contributed 9.4 per cent of the students, while representing 14 per cent of the state population.

The usual explanation for the under-representation of the lower classes in institutions of higher learning is that the children from these classes lack intelligence or have no interest in a higher education. To some extent this explanation may be true, but there is no denying of the fact that ambitious lower class children who are seekers after a higher education are often stymied by social and economic handicaps that prevent or preclude social mobility through higher education.

* * *

Parental income was found to be directly related to college attendance in a study by Goetsch of 1,023 high school graduates of above-average intelligence. The intelligence quotients of these students ranged from 117 to 146. At one extreme, 100 per cent of the students coming from families with parental incomes of \$8,000 and over attended college full-time, and at the other extreme, only 20.4 per cent of the students coming from families with parental incomes of under \$500 attended college (1938). The higher the parents' income the higher was the proportion of children who attended college.

The relative influence of socio-economic

background, and test-intelligence on the terminal educational level of students was made the subject of studies by Sibley, and Warner. These studies were based on data collected in an ex post facto investigation made in 1934 by the Pennsylvania State Department of Public Instruction and the American Youth Commission. The data collected included the names of Pennsylvania youth who were in the sixth grade as of 1926, in selected public schools, the highest educational level these students reached by 1934, their test-intelligence, and their fathers' occupation.

In Warner's analysis, 910 of the students with intelligence quotients of 110 or more were divided into two categories on the basis of socio-economic background. Of the upper socio-economic group, 93 per cent graduated from high school and 57 per cent attended college. Of the lower socio-economic group, 72 per cent graduated from high school and 13 per cent attended college. Although both groups were about equal in test-intelli-

gence the chances of attending college increased as socio-economic background increased.

Sibley found in his study, with the influence of parental social status held constant, that a boy with an intelligence quotient of 112 or over held only a four to one advantage over a boy rated 87 or less in reaching an institution of higher learning. However, the influence of socio-economic background on a student's chances of reaching an institution of higher learning was much greater. It was found that boys with fathers in the highest occupational category enjoyed an advantage of more than 10 to 1 over those from the lowest occupational level in their chances of reaching an institution of higher learning. The conclusion was reached that as a student passes through our educational system his socio-economic background increases in importance per se and in relation to test-intelligence in determining his chances of a higher education.

39 • *The Significance of Classes for the Teacher*

We have learned that the motivations and personalities of children are deeply influenced by the attitudes and behavior of their parents in caring for and disciplining them. But we tend to forget that the attitudes and behavior of parents are conditioned largely by the patterns of thinking and acting sanctioned by the social group of which the family itself is a part.

In the following selection, Allison Davis emphasizes the role of status-class attitudes and standards in the rearing of children. Indeed, Davis goes so far as to say that in child development we cannot generalize about *the* child but only about children of a particular class. Further, he insists that the failure of teachers to understand lower-class goals and behavior has made it impossible for them to motivate properly the great masses of lower-class children in the public school. The failure of these children to learn, he says, is due to the fact that the school community does not reward the tentative efforts of lower-class children to gain prestige by adopting middle-class patterns of behavior. Instead, the child is punished because his efforts, from a middle-class point of view, are inadequate and fumbling.

Unquestionably, Professor Davis' thesis is highly interesting and important. If he

is correct, the class pattern found in the school itself is, to a marked extent, responsible for the failure of many lower-class children to learn the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral patterns which the school seeks to develop in its pupils. But his argument raises a serious question. Lower-class attitudes, goals, and behavior are, he insists, instilled in the children of this class by the powerful sanctions of the home and the neighborhood. The school undertakes—properly so, he says—to replace these lower-class patterns with the more adequate and socially useful patterns of middle-class culture. It is, of course, true that the school would be more effective in achieving this goal if the teachers had a better understanding of lower-class attitudes and motivations. But we must still ask whether the school, under the very best of conditions, could overcome in most instances the pervasive influence of home and neighborhood. In other words, can the achievement of the goals of education be ensured through the environment of the school alone? Or will the achievement of these goals require, in addition, a determined effort to modify or abolish the lower-class culture itself?

Put in still another way, can the school be expected to overcome single-handedly the miseducative effects of the social arrangements that have produced the lower-class culture? The question is important because the public has in recent years frequently blamed the school for behavior of its students that is, in fact, induced by social conditions which society is not willing to alter.

A child's social learning takes place chiefly in the environment of his family, his family's social clique, and his own social clique. The instigations, goals, and sanctions of both the family and of the intimate clique are a function principally of their class ways, that is, of *the status demands in their part of the society*. The number of class controls and dogmas which a child must learn and struggle continually to maintain, in order to meet his family's status demands as a class unit, is great. Class training of the child ranges all the way from the control of the manner and ritual by which he eats his food to the control of his choice of playmates and of his educational and occupational goals. The times and places for his recreation, the chores required of him by his family, the rooms and articles in the house which he may use, the wearing of certain clothes at certain times, the amount

of studying required of him, the economic controls to which he is subjected by his parents, indeed his very conceptions of right and wrong, all vary according to the social class of the child in question.

Our knowledge of social class training and of the biological and psychological differentials in child development as between class environments is now sufficient to enable us to say that no studies can henceforth generalize about "the child." We shall always have to ask, "A child of what class, in what environment?" Very few of the statements which one might make concerning the physical growth, the socialization, or the motivation of lower-class children, for example, would hold for upper-middle-class children, even in the same city.

Class ways in child training, as well as the class-motivating factors in the child's social

[From Allison Davis, "Status Systems and the Socialization of the Child," *American Sociological Review*, 6 (June 1941): 345-354. This excerpt will be found on pp. 352-354. Used by permission.]

learning, differ sharply even when the observer considers only the classes having low status. The social instigations and goals of the lower-middle class, for example, are fundamentally unlike those of the lower class. In education, the ineffectiveness of middle-class sanctions upon the great masses of lower-class children probably is the crucial dilemma of our thoroughly middle-class teachers and school systems. The processes underlying this failure are not yet clear, but it seems probable from life histories that lower-class children remain "unsocialized" and "unmotivated" (from the viewpoint of middle-class culture) because (1) they are humiliated and punished too severely in the school for *having the lower-class culture* which their own mothers, fathers, and siblings approve, and (2) because the most powerful reinforcements in learning, namely, those of emotional and social reward, are systematically denied to the lower-class child by the systems of privilege existing in the school and in the larger society.

The culture which the child brings to school with him has been instilled by the class environment of his family and his intimate associates. Except in the case of class-striving families and children, this culture is maintained by this same status-bound class world, undergoing relatively slight modifications from classroom instruction. In the middle-class family and environment, it is true, the teacher meets support for her methods and goals in child training. If she is to pit herself against the lower- and upper-class child and family, who are from a quite different culture, however, she and the school administration have need for socially more skillful methods and less ethnocentric, middle-class bias with regard to manners, aggression, and recreation than they now reveal.

For in all these last named patterns of behavior, child training in the lower class and lower-middle class which have been selected here for illustrative purposes, differ markedly. In the lower-middle class, parents exert a strenuous and unrelenting push to motivate their children to study their lessons, to repress

aggression at school, to inhibit sexual impulses, to avoid lower-class playmates, to attend Sunday School regularly, to avoid cabarets, beer parlors, pool parlors, and gambling houses. They keep steadily before the child, often in the face of economic disaster, the status goals of a "nice" play group and social clique, a high-school education, skilled or white-collar occupation, and a "good" middle-class marriage.

In lower-class white or Negro society, on the other hand, a child lives in a different cultural environment; he is surrounded by people who have habits quite different from those of the lower-middle class, and who make other demands and set different goals before him. Among lower-class urban *whites* in the South, for example, extramarital partnerships are common for both husband and wife; separations are the rule; fighting, shooting, cutting, gambling, and frequently magic are accepted classways; church and lodge participations scarcely exist. With regard to sex, education, occupation, recreation, and marriage, the goals which the lower-class family, white or Negro, sets before the child are basically unlike those in the lower-middle-class family. This difference is greatest in those areas of behavior which middle-class society most strongly controls, *i.e.*, aggression, sex responses, and property rights.

As the middle-class child grows older, the effective rewards in maintaining learning are increasingly those of status; they are associated with the prestige of middle- or upper-class rank and culture. The class goals in education, occupation, and status are made to appear real, valuable, and certain to him because he actually begins to experience in his school, clique, and family life some of the prestige responses. The lower-class child, however, *learns* by *not* being rewarded in these prestige relationships that the middle-class goals and gains are neither likely nor desirable for one in his position. He discovers by trial-and-error learning that he is not going to be rewarded in terms of these long-range, status goals, if he is a "good little boy," if he

avoids the sexual and recreational exploration available to him in his lower-class environment, or if he studies his lessons. In this learning, he is often more realistic than his teacher, if one judges by the actual cultural role which the society affords him.

In order to motivate the great masses of lower-class children who crowd our elementary and secondary schools so that they will learn the educational and technical skills, the sexual and aggressive controls, and the manners which will enable them to gain higher privileges and greater social and economic efficiency, educators must first know lower-class culture and understand the instigations and goals of the lower-class child. If these old habits and reinforcements of the lower-class child are to be replaced by new learning which will enable the school to recruit the child into the middle-class way of life (with

an attendant increase in the social and economic efficiency of our society), the school must (1) remove the class punishments from the lower-class child within the school society and (2) concretely reward his tentative striving for prestige in the school community. The striving which the middle-class pupil exhibits is driven by socially adaptive forms of anxiety, learned in his class world. As yet, it seems, our society must depend upon this process for maintaining the long-range instigations which effective socialization in the high-skill roles demands. In order to reinforce the lower-class child in such striving, the teacher and social worker must learn to reward him. To be capable of this type of education, they must be able to view their own middle-class status and culture with a wholesome degree of objectivity.

40 • Stages of Class Awareness Among Elementary-school Children

After the first few years of his life, peer groups are nearly as powerful as the family in shaping the personality of the child. Moreover, the attitudes and behavior of these peer groups are an essential part of the school environment. In so far as there is substance to the charge that our schools seriously discriminate against lower-class children, the attitudes of middle- and upper-class children are a significant part of this discrimination. Conversely, the lower-class child's perception that he is lower class—and, hence, inferior—inevitably influences his own attitudes and behavior.

For both these reasons, the stages by which young children become aware of class distinctions and class symbols are an important aspect of the school environment, and of the teacher's understanding of the significance of class for the educational enterprise. In the following selection, Celia B. Stendler depicts the major stages of class awareness which she found in her study of the elementary-school children of "Brasstown." Mrs. Stendler is an able student of child development, whose *Children of Brasstown* (from which this selection was taken) is frequently cited as an outstanding study of the educational import of our status-class structure.

Four stages that children go through in their thinking about social class symbols are presented below. There is nothing fixed or sacred about the number of such stages; one could very well describe twenty or thirty different levels. The following four were decided upon because they seem, in the writer's opinion, to mark important points on the developmental ladder.

Stage I. Pre-awareness

It is safe to assume from what we know about the relative effects of heredity and environment that children are not born with an awareness of social class. From the findings presented here it would seem that many children even in grade 4 are not yet aware of social class symbols. At this level, before awareness is learned, the terms rich and poor have little meaning for the child; they are halo terms that he applies to whatever and whom-ever he likes or dislikes. He likes to boast about himself, and he emphatically proclaims that he is rich, that he lives in the best house, that he has the most toys. His friends, too, are rich, but the child whom he rejects is poor, doesn't have much to play with, and is "shacky." He thinks in terms of extremes only; everyone either has lots of money or not much money, and there are no in-betweens. His choice of friends reveals little awareness of class differences. He chooses indiscriminately from his school group although his out-of-school friends are limited because of his geographic boundaries. When he grows up he wants to be a policeman, a pilot, a cowboy, or have any other colorful occupation without regard for its social class position. He has not sorted out his schoolmates according to class; he is just as likely to think a working-class child lives in the best section of town as an upper-middle. When he does rate children . . . he is wrong in his judgments, as compared with adults. . . .

Stage II. Beginnings of Awareness

This stage extends from before the fourth grade to beyond the sixth and is characterized

by signs of increasing class consciousness. The child recognizes some of the symbols of social class in the sample, particularly the ones with which he has had firsthand experience. Apparently the symbols connected with the lower class impress him more or are more obvious than upper-class symbols, for he is more accurate in his ratings of pictures and people representing lower-classness. He can pick out children with "not much money" in his schoolroom, but he judges on the basis of their clothes and what they bring to school. He still does not know much about the kind of house in which his schoolmates live or what their fathers do for a living, and so he frequently contradicts himself in picking out the symbols of class. He chooses his friends without regard for class both in and out of school, and he disregards social class in naming his choice of future occupation. He no longer sees the world just in terms of rich and poor; he also recognizes an in-between. His social class awareness is spotty but is growing.

Stage III. Acceptance of Adult Stereotypes

This stage begins before grade 6 and continues through grade 8. It is characterized by a denial of class and a shift in attitudes toward rich and poor. Here the children reveal their awareness of social class symbols in many ways. They can rate pictures according to class more accurately than before, and the reasons they give for their ratings have to do with the exclusiveness of what they see, or the money involved, or the privileges accompanying a particular class station. They rate the class position of their schoolmates on the basis of home and family, occupation of the father, clothes, and manners, but they are reluctant to name classmates for unfavorable socioeconomic items and deny class differences by stating that "nobody" represents the undesirable. Similarly they become increasingly aware of what they will probably do for a living later in life, and, although many of them realize they will end up with upper- or lower-class jobs, they rate their own class position as

[From Celia B. Stendler, *Children of Brasstown*, Bureau of Educational Research and Service, University of Illinois, 1949, pp. 90-95. Used by permission.]

middle. They choose friends largely from within their own class groups, and there is little interaction between upper-middles and working-class children. They connect favorable items of behavior with uppers and unfavorable with lowers but are beginning to defend the poor and criticize the rich. At the same time they reject more working-class children than upper-middles. They reflect the many contradictions about class which are prevalent in our culture.

Stage IV. Recognition of Individual Differences Among Children Regardless of Social Class

It is impossible to describe with any accuracy the characteristics of awareness of social class symbols at this level because there were only a few evidences of stage IV in this study. This level appeared as early as the fourth grade, but even in the eighth grade most of the children were still at the third level in their development of awareness, and it is very likely that many will continue in their complete acceptance of the adult stereotypes. The fourth level goes farther than mere recognition of symbols; the child knows what the symbols mean to most people, but he also makes judgments not in terms of class but in terms of individuals. He is aware of the existence of social classes, but he no longer associates the good with the rich and the bad with the poor. Nor is it necessary for him to criticize the rich and defend the poor. He recognizes that a person from any class may be responsible for the acceptable or non-acceptable deed. Upper-middle-class children were the first to show evidence of this particular stage of development, perhaps because of their higher intelligence and perhaps because of the security their class position affords them.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions about various aspects of the problem of children's awareness of social class symbols are presented below.

Awareness of Class Symbols

First grade children show little awareness of the symbols of class so far as one can judge

by their ability to rate pictures of jobs, recreation, clothing, and homes. They judge almost entirely by such factors as behavior and cleanliness. Their replies reveal very naive notions of how our economic system works.

Fourth grade children are more discerning in their ratings. Some of the reasons given by fourth graders in rating a picture continue to be on an immature level, but they are beginning to show an awareness of symbols which are economic in origin.

The two upper grades, especially the eighth, are very much like adults in their ratings. While emphasis is on economic symbols, eighth graders are beginning to note that there may be a disparity between place in society and income.

Sex Differences in Awareness of Class Symbols

In so far as one can tell by their ability to rate such pictures, girls are more conscious of class symbols than boys in the upper grades. In the first and fourth grades, boys show closer agreement with adults in their rating of pictures than do girls.

Class Differences in Awareness of Class Symbols

According to their rating of pictures, upper-middle-class children are more conscious of class symbols than any other class at all grade levels studied. White-collar-class children's ratings of pictures showed that they were next most conscious of class symbols, and working-class children revealed the least consciousness.

Attitudes Toward Different Social Classes

Children's opinions about members of a particular social class change considerably as they go through elementary school. Effects of the halo in favor of the rich are most apparent at the first and fourth grades. Young children tend to identify being rich with everything desirable, being poor with everything undesirable.

Older children of the white-collar and working class appear to develop a stereotyped concept of class character according to which the child who is rich is a not-very-honest,

sissy character, and the child who is poor is a friendly, hard-working, honest kind of person whom everybody likes.

Class Differences in Out-of-School Activities

Children's out-of-school activities tend to be conditioned by the class position of their parents. Upper-middle-class children join more organizations than working-class children. They also take more lessons. There seems to be some class difference in the kind of lesson taken, with the "genteel" arts (piano, violin, ballroom dancing) being favored by the upper-middles, and the more vigorous tap, trumpet, trombone, and accordion being favored by some white-collar and more working-class children. White-collar and working-class children tend to take lessons earlier in life but stop them sooner. Some upper-middle-class children have an opportunity to learn to ride and to learn another language in the sixth and eighth grades. More working-class children work after school than any other class.

Class Differences in Choosing Friends

In choice of friends, there is a difference between in-school and out-of-school choices, with in-school choices being more democratic. Birthday guest choices tend to follow out-of-school choices. In choosing in-school friends, first grade children show the least class bias, while children in grades four and six show an increasing tendency to stay within their own social class. In choosing out-of-school friends, first grade children are most limited to their own social class. Fourth graders are the most democratic. Sixth and eighth graders revert to the first grade pattern and choose largely from their own social class. On the sixth and eighth grade levels there is little social interaction between upper-middle and working class.

Working-class children are most frequently named as the ones with whom the chooser wouldn't care to associate. The proportion of working-class children thus named is greater than the proportion of working-class children who would be rejected by chance.

Children's Awareness of Their Own Social Class Position

First grade children show little awareness of their own social class position. Most first graders report that they are rich. Fourth graders show a tendency to rate themselves as in-between. Almost all sixth and eighth graders describe themselves as in-between.

Children's Awareness of the Social Class Positions of Their Schoolmates

First-grade children showed little ability to judge whether a fellow schoolmate is rich or poor, which is one factor in determining social class position. Six-year-olds tend to think the child they like best is rich. Fourth-grade children are correct over half the time in their selection of a child from a family that has money. Sixth and eighth graders show considerable accuracy in rating other children's social class position, when their ratings are compared with adult ratings.

Criteria Children Use in Rating Other Children's Social Class Positions

In explaining their reasons for rating other children as rich, poor, or in-between, young children tend to distinguish chiefly on the basis of being clean or dirty and doing the forbidden or doing what is right.

Fourth-graders occasionally mention occupation of the father as a factor, particularly when the occupation impresses them; they are also aware of such symbols as owning a big house and going to private school.

Sixth- and eighth-graders judge other children by occupation of the father, clothes, manners, and family connections. They also recognize different sections of town as having high or low status.

Awareness of Class as Revealed in Choice of Future Occupation

Children's three choices of occupation show no class influence in the first grade and little more in the fourth. The young child is just as likely to name upper-, lower-, or middle-class occupations in any order, regardless of his own class position. Beginning with the

sixth grade, and very evident in the eighth grade, there is a tendency for all classes to name an upper- or middle-class occupation for first choice. For the third choice, working-

class upper-grade children are more likely to name a lower-class occupation, showing that they may have some appreciation of what they realize their life chances to be.

41 • The Motivational Structure of the Lower Class

In Selection 39 we considered Allison Davis' thesis that the effectiveness of the school in educating lower-class children depends upon an understanding by teachers of the motivational structure of the children from the lower class. In the following selection, Davis depicts in detail some of the most important aspects of this motivational structure—particularly as it is manifested in the lowest segment of the lower class, the slum culture. Further, Davis undertakes to show that the motivations of this bottom segment of the lower class grow out of the anxieties induced by the conditions of slum life. In reading this selection, it is important to remember that the slum environment is found in rural areas as well as in our larger cities.

Any attempt to trace the processes by which human beings in our society learn their social drives and social goals must face the problem of social-class differences in motivation. These differences occur in most of the basic areas of human psychology: in mental problem-solving, and in the motivational areas of hunger, sex, and aggression. The most urgent problem for the public schools is to learn the motivational structure of lower-class children and adolescents. About two thirds of our elementary school pupils have been trained in lower-class families and neighborhoods; at least one third of our school population comes from the bottom group within the lower class, the slum culture.

The fate of our nation, industrially, politically, and in case of war, depends primarily upon the ability of the public schools to help large numbers of children from these slum and farm-tenant groups to learn the basic skills of our society. The schools have not learned how to do this. Our public schools for

the lowest third of our population, the schools in slums, are almost a complete failure. The staffs of these schools generally are aware of their basic failure, and are demoralized. Little serious effort has been made by our teachers, colleges, and universities to investigate this major problem in public education. Our effort here will be directed primarily, therefore, toward examining the motivational structure as learned by the lower-class child from his family and other cultural groups.

To understand the socialization of slum children, one must first view the slum adult-world, and trace the motivational system which slum adults exhibit, as a group. What are the basic social drives of slum adults? To put this question more carefully, what experiences does the slum individual learn from his group to define as "pleasant," and what experiences does he learn to define as "painful" among the available experiences in his world?

[From Allison Davis, *Social-Class Influences upon Learning*, Harvard University Press, copyright 1948 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, pp. 22-30, 33-36. Reprinted by permission.]

One of the most basic differences in motivation between lower-class and middle-class people is their attitude toward eating. Owing to the greater security of their food supply, middle-class people eat more regularly. They therefore have learned to eat more sparingly at any given time, because they know they are certain of their next meal. They have also developed a conscientious taboo upon "overeating"; they feel some guilt about getting fat and about what they call "raiding the ice-box."

Slum people, however, have a very uncertain food supply. Their fear that they will not get enough to eat develops soon after the nursing period. Therefore, when the supply is plentiful, they eat as much as they can hold. They "pack food away" in themselves as a protection against the shortage which will develop before the next payday. They wish to get fat, for they regard fat as a protection against tuberculosis and physical weakness. Basically, the origin of this attitude toward eating is their deep fear of starvation.

Just as food-anxiety is far more urgent in lower-class than it is in middle-class society, so is the anxiety which is aroused by the danger of eviction from shelter, the danger of having too little sleep, the danger of being cold, and the danger of being in the dark. The middle-class individual is relatively certain that he will have enough coal or light; he buys his coal by the ton or the five tons; he burns five or ten electric lights. But the lower-class person's hold upon fire for heating is on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis. He buys coal by the bushel, or by the five bushels, or by one-ton loads. Every week or so, therefore, he has to face the fear of being cold, and of having his children cold.

Similarly with light, his anxiety is far more chronic and realistic. His evenings are spent in a gray light; if more than one or two bulbs are used, and those are not of the lowest candle power, he will not be able to pay the light bill. Therefore, the fear of not having so basic a necessity as light—a fear which middle-class people escape after childhood—is recurrent with the slum individual. Walk into any real slum housing at night. People

are crowded together in a dingy, twilight world. Their streets and alleys likewise are full of darkness, so that their chronic expectation of assault or rape is increased.

Just as slum people have painful, anxiety-ridden associations with food, so they have with shelter, sleep, and darkness. To this list must be added the fear of being inadequately clothed in winter. Most slum men, Negroes and whites, have no overcoat in normal times. Most sharecroppers' children have no woolen clothes in cold winter weather.

Now, when these same people get relatively large increases in income—as they did during the late war—they spend their money "extravagantly," as middle-class people judge their behavior. What is the meaning of this "splurging" for fur coats, for expensive clothes for children, for new furniture, and so forth? Part of the motivation is a drive for prestige-symbols, an attempt to acquire some of the signs of middle-class status. Equally important, certainly, is its function as a defense against anxiety, which is similar to the function of their Gargantuan eating after payday. When one has money, he buys things which he will be able to buy only once or twice in his lifetime—such things as expensive, respectable, or warm clothes, and a "decent" bed. He burns all the lights he wants; he eats great quantities of meat.

Thus, lower-class people look upon life as a recurrent series of depressions and peaks, with regard to the gratification of their basic needs. In their lives, it is all or nothing, or next-to-nothing. When they have fire, their homes are stifling hot, and everyone sits as close to the fire as possible. For they remember anxiously what it was to be cold; to be too cold to sit in the house; so cold that the whole family must go to bed to keep warm. Just as their deep anxiety about starvation leads them even in good times to glut themselves, as middle-class people view their eating, so does the learned fear of deprivation drive lower-class people to get all they can of the other physical gratifications, "while the getting is good."

It would be more rational if they saved and budgeted their money, but human beings are

not rational. They are what their culture teaches them to be. "Man is a reasoning, but not a reasonable animal." Lower-class people cannot learn middle-class foresight and moderation unless they can participate socially with middle-class people, whom they may then learn to imitate. So far, the public school is our only chance to teach lower-class people the middle-class motivational pattern. But the schools do not yet understand how to reward lower-class pupils. Furthermore, our economic system does not offer any prospect of a regular income to slum people; therefore, they lack the relative security which must underlie habits of saving, buying insurance, home buying, and so forth. As the average slum worker says, "Why should I try to save? The little bit I could put aside will be gone six months after the next depression starts."

Turning now to those experiences which are defined as painful chiefly by the social, as contrasted to the physical, environment, we find that the socially aroused anxieties are still more numerous. The middle-class view that slum people have no sense of respectability, feel no pressure for social conformity, is simply ignorance of the facts. Lower-class culture includes a vast number of social taboos, and therefore stimulates a great number of social anxieties. First--to return to the so-called "physical" area of food, shelter, heat, and so on--slum culture has its own "decent" or "respectable" standards for food and housing. Lower-class people learn their own group's cultural standard of "enough to eat," or "a good house," or "good furniture." It is probably only when the cultural goals for subsistence (as "subsistence" is defined by slum culture) are threatened, therefore, that the person experiences marked anxiety. Lower-class people consider the same house or job as "good" which middle-class people regard as humiliating. The same standard of living that raises the anxiety of middle-class people will greatly allay the anxiety of slum people in our present social system.

The socially defined dangers of slum life originate in the threat of disapproval, ridicule, or rejection of the individual by his fam-

ily, play-group, gang, church, club, and so on. All these lower-class groups make cultural demands of the child and adolescent, just as do the middle-class family, play-group, and so on. But the demands are generally different than those of the middle-class group. In other words, the lower-class individual is taught by his culture to be anxious about different social dangers. Whereas the middle-class child learns a socially adaptive fear of receiving poor grades in school, of being aggressive toward the teacher, of fighting, of cursing, and of having early sex relations, the slum child learns to fear quite different social acts. His gang teaches him to fear being taken in by the teacher, of being a softie with her. To study homework seriously is literally a disgrace. Instead of boasting of good marks in school, one conceals them, if he ever receives any. The lower-class individual fears *not* to be thought a street-fighter; it is a suspicious and dangerous social trait. He fears *not to curse*. If he cannot claim early sex relations, his virility is seriously questioned.

Thus society raises many anxieties in slum people also, but with regard to the attainment of what seem to middle-class people to be strange goals. For those who must live in a slum community, however, these goals are realistic and adaptive.

* * *

The aggressive behavior of adolescents is a crucial case in point. In the middle class, aggression is clothed in the conventional forms of initiative, or ambition, or even of progressiveness, but in the lower class it more often appears unabashed as physical attack, or as threats of and encouragement for physical attack. In general, middle-class aggression is taught to adolescents in the form of social and economic skills which will enable them to compete effectively at that level. The lower classes not uncommonly teach their children and adolescents to strike out with fist or knife and to be certain to hit first. Both girls and boys at adolescence may curse their father to his face or even attack him with fists, sticks, or axes in free-for-all family encounters. Hus-

bands and wives sometimes stage pitched battles in the home; wives have their husbands arrested; and husbands try to break in or burn down their own homes when locked out. Such fights with fists or weapons, and the whipping of wives, occur sooner or later in most lower-class families. They may not appear today, nor tomorrow, but they will appear if the observer remains long enough.

The important consideration with regard to physical aggression in lower-class adolescents is, therefore, that it is learned as an approved and socially rewarded form of behavior in their culture. An interviewer of ours recently observed two nursery-school boys from lower-class families; they were boasting about the length of their fathers' clasp knives! The parents themselves have taught their children to fight not only children of either sex but also adults who "make trouble" for them. If the child or adolescent cannot whip a grown opponent, the mother or father will join the fight. In such lower-class groups, an adolescent boy who does not try to be a good fighter will not receive the approval of the father, nor will he be acceptable to any play-group or gang. The result of these cultural sanctions is that he learns to fight and to admire fighters.

* * *

Stealing is another form of aggression which lower-class parents verbally forbid, but which many of them in fact allow—so long as their child does not steal from his family or its close friends. The example of the adolescent's play-group and of his own kin, however, is the crucial determinant of his behavior. Even where the efforts of the parent to instill middle-class mores in the child are more than halfhearted, the power of the street culture in which the child and adolescent are trained overwhelms the parental verbal instruction. The rewards of gang social prestige, of freedom of movement, and of property-gain all seem to be on the side of the street culture.

Like physical aggression, sexual relationships and motivation are more direct and uninhibited in lower-class adolescents. The most striking departure from the usual middle-class motivation is that, in much lower-class life, sexual drives and behavior in children are not regarded as inherently taboo and dangerous.

There are many parents in low-status culture, of course, who taboo these behaviors for their girls. Mothers try to prevent daughters from having children before they are married, but the example of the girl's own family is often to the contrary.

42 • *The Middle-class Bias of Teachers*

The heart of Davis' thesis, as set forth in Selections 39 and 41, is that the public school is permeated by a middle-class bias which severely handicaps lower-class children. But these two selections were not directly concerned with documenting or illustrating this bias. Obviously, it is important for the teacher to determine whether or not the school does embody a strong middle-class bias, and, if her findings corroborate this bias, to discover the ways in which the middle-class orientation influences the conduct of the school in dealing with lower-class children.

The next four selections (42 through 45) are devoted to the exploration of these problems. In the following selection, W. Lloyd Warner offers evidence, drawn from

several studies of class structure and its effects on education, that the vast majority of teachers in the public schools are members of the middle class and, as such, share middle-class values and points of view. Further, Warner cites evidence to show that the middle-class orientation of teachers does affect their attitude toward and treatment of lower-class children.

The overwhelming proportion of teachers in the grammar schools and high schools are middle-class, often lower-middle-class. Many, if not most of them, have been mobile from the upper-lower class. Teaching is one of the most accessible and socially visible professions for ambitious women to enter. In the town of Midwest, 98 per cent of the teachers were middle-class; in Yankee City, 97 per cent; and in Deep South, 92 per cent. None of the teachers in Midwest was upper-class; only about 3 per cent in Yankee City; and 5 per cent in Deep South. There were no teachers from the lowest class in any of these communities. Only 2 per cent of Midwest's teachers were upper-lower and 3 per cent of Deep South's. All of Yankee City's teachers were middle-class or better. The teachers tend to be a step or two below the school board in status, but, on the average, they occupy a superior position to that of most of their students. Approximately 60 per cent of the students are lower-class, 30 per cent lower-middle, and about 10 per cent upper and upper-middle. . . . This means that well over half the children are in direct relations with teachers whose values and ideas differ from their own.

Since the teachers' judgments of the children and of standards of performance are inevitably based on their own personal standards, buttressed by those set up by the school as an institution, the lower-class child is at a disadvantage when competing with children from the middle classes. Furthermore, the formal learning problems set by the school, which the child must solve to advance to higher grades, and the subject matter taught

tend to be expressions of middle-class beliefs, values, and experience which place the lower-class child at a very serious disadvantage. In addition, it must be remembered that the majority of the lower-class children who enter school come from families where they did not acquire strong motivations to succeed in school, as did most middle-class children. The early formative period in which the personality acquires a rudimentary system of values and beliefs prepares the children differentially for competition in the local schools. The later period in the school, reinforced by the continuing influences of the home, completes what the family begins. The formal academic learning maze strengthens, supports, and continues what the family has started.

The schools in many communities of the United States divide their children into sections which represent the teachers' estimates of the children's ability. Deep South had such a system, in which the children were divided into good, average, and poor sections. The Gardners and Davises, who did the research there, compared the teachers' ratings of their students with the social class of the children's parents and followed up this procedure by interviewing the teachers. They found that upper-middle and upper-class children were considered by the teachers to be overwhelmingly above average in their scholastic aptitudes, while only a small proportion of the lower class were rated as "good scholars." To be more precise, over four fifths (85 per cent) of the upper and upper-middle children were given top rating, whereas only 11 per cent of the children from the lower class achieved

this rating. On the other hand, only 6 per cent of the children from the higher statuses were given a poor rating, as compared with 36 per cent of the lower-class children.

What is the meaning of these great differences between the teachers' ratings of the aptitudes of the children from the two classes? The interviews with the teachers themselves were very revealing and demonstrated how status values operate in the democratically conceived "public" school. Some teachers felt in all sincerity that, even though a child from a higher class did not show high ability, it would not be right to place him scholastically in a section that was below his social station, because "he would not be with his own kind and would be forced to go around with children that were not of his cultural level." Other factors were involved. Some of the lower-class children did not do as well because they were inadequately equipped; others, because they had little or no interest; still others, because the teachers misjudged their lower-class manners, behavior, and speech for lack of ability.

Later studies in Jonesville and elsewhere have verified much of what we only suspected from the Yankee City and Deep South studies. Further research by Allison Davis

and Robert Havighurst on the cultural (social-class) bias of the standard I.Q. tests demonstrated that the "lower intelligence" scores of the average lower-class child are due to the fact that the tests are built on middle-class culture. Such words as "orchestra" and many of the experiences which the tests imply are less likely to be in the world of the lower than that of the middle classes. Since middle-class children are trained in such a culture, learn at home how to solve such problems, and are motivated to do so, they perform well, whereas the lower-class child often has little experience with such cultural situations and cares even less about the problems presented by such tests. He drops out of school, not so much because he is inherently stupid as because he has learned from his social maze not to want to be anything more than what he is. Although most lower-class children remain in their own class, a few do use the school to rise. Some of them come from homes which teach them to rise, some appeal to teachers who take a special interest in them, and others form friendships which carry them beyond their own levels to higher ones and provide them with the desire to do well in school and advance themselves in life.

43 • Class Bias in the Schools of "Elmtown"

In the preceding selection, Professor Warner showed that teachers are predominantly members of the middle class. He also cited evidence tending to support the thesis that the school, as it is now conducted, does discriminate against lower-class children.

In the following selection, August R. Hollingshead, a sociologist, who has been associated with Warner in the study of class structure and who has evinced a special interest in education, cites, in some detail, evidence of a strong class bias in the schools of "Elmtown." This bias, according to Hollingshead, permeates almost all the activities of the school, including the instructional program, the extracurricular program, and the distribution of academic rewards and punishments.

[From August R. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1949, pp. 168-172. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

The high school curriculum is organized around three courses: college preparatory, general, and commercial. Enrollment in each course is related very significantly to class position; that is, each course acts either to attract or repel students in the different prestige classes. In 1941, the class I's and class II's concentrated on the college preparatory (64 per cent) and ignored the commercial course. Fifty-one per cent of the class III's were in the general, 27 per cent in the college preparatory, and 21 per cent in the commercial course. The class IV's entered the general (58 per cent) and commercial courses (33 per cent) and avoided the college preparatory; only 9 per cent were in it. The pattern for the class V's was similar to the class IV's, except that 38 per cent were in the commercial and 4 per cent in the college preparatory course.

The prestige bias in the different courses is particularly clear among the girls. For instance, 12 of the 14 class II girls (86 per cent) enrolled in the college preparatory course; none in the secretarial division of the commercial course; and only one in the general-commercial course, and one in the general course. Sixty-two per cent of the girls from class IV and 38 per cent from class III were concentrated in the commercial course, particularly in the secretarial division. Since most girls trained in the secretarial division find jobs as secretaries and clerks in Elmtown's offices after graduation, the high school provides these girls with specialized terminal education.

The elementary curriculum trains children on the assumption that they will enter high school, and the high school in turn is oriented principally toward the preparation of students to enter college. Neither educational level is looked upon as terminal by the school administrators and teachers, yet one-third of the potential pupils never reach the high school, and of those who start less than one-half finish. Between 1935 and 1942, one-third of the adolescents who reached 18 each year graduated from high school, and, of this group, only from 15 to 18 per cent left Elm-

town to pursue some form of additional training. Less than one-half of the latter group went to a college or university. The remainder entered nurse's training, or took secretarial courses, business, Diesel-engine, air-conditioning, photographic, or other specified vocational training. Thus, although the high school represented the end of formal education for at least 4 out of 5 of its graduates, the curricular emphasis was on the college preparatory student.

This condition undoubtedly is related to the values assigned by students and teachers to the college preparatory course in contrast to the general and commercial courses. A senior girl summarized the prevailing views of the college preparatory students when she said:

If you take a college preparatory course, you're better than those who take a general course. Those who take a general course are neither here nor there. If you take a commercial course, you don't rate. It's a funny thing, those who take college preparatory set themselves up as better than the other kids. Those that take the college preparatory course run the place. I remember when I was a freshman, mother wanted me to take home economics, but I didn't want to. I knew I couldn't rate. You could take typing and shorthand and still rate, but if you took a straight commercial course, you couldn't rate. You see, you're rated by the teachers according to the course you take. They rate you in the first six weeks. The teachers type you in a small school and you're made in classes before you get there. College preparatory kids get good grades and the others take what's left. The teachers get together and talk, and if you are not in college preparatory you haven't got a chance.

The students may reflect the attitudes held generally by the teachers, but we believe that the favorable prestige assigned to the college preparatory course is connected functionally with the fact that the majority of class II

youngsters were enrolled in it. If a person wants to "rate," especially among the girls, it is wise to enroll in the college preparatory course.

* * *

Because the academic teachers believe that college preparatory students have more ability, are more interested, and do better work than those in the general course, they prefer to teach the former group. Although these contentions may be true, more probably teachers of the college preparatory group satisfy their desire to see the students reflect the academic values they hold. These teachers look upon students in the general course as persons who have nothing better to do with their time, are mediocre in ability, lack motivation and interest. Students in the commercial courses are believed to be lower in ability than those in the general course.

Ten teachers are in the academic and five in the vocational group. The vocational teachers differ from the academic teachers in their estimates of student ability, as they do in most things relative to the school; they believe that students specializing in their courses are as bright as the rest of the lot. These divergent beliefs between the two groups are in part a defense of their own interests and in part a result of the thinly veiled animosity that prevails between the academic and the vocational teachers. Each teacher in the vocational subjects—agriculture, home economics, shop, band, and secretarial science—has an especially equipped room. Teachers in the traditional subjects—English, algebra, geometry, Latin, French, chemistry, physics, and history—believe that too much money is spent out of the limited school budget to equip these rooms. They are correct in their argument that more money is invested in this equipment than in all the rest of the school; moreover, it is comparatively new, whereas the academic teachers have to use equipment that dates as far back as 1890. Salary differences between the two groups is another potent source of friction, since the highest salaries are paid to the vocational and the lowest to the academic teachers. The cleavage be-

tween the academic and non-academic interests enter into every aspect of school life—curriculum, grades, student government, athletics, and the cliques in which one participates.

CLASS INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC REWARDS

The Superintendent in his Annual Report to the Board of Education in June, 1942, analyzed the grades students received the preceding year. In connection with this report he stated: "No effort is made arbitrarily to conform to a normal distribution curve, but it is surprising how nearly the total marks do approach the normal curve. . . ."

The semester grades do approximate a normal distribution, but the Superintendent's report does not reveal that high grades went to the students from the "better" homes and the low ones to the pupils from "inadequate" or "unfortunate" homes. This fact becomes apparent when the grades of each student are averaged, and average grades tabulated by class on a three-division scale. The results stated in per cents follow.

Class	<i>Per Cent with Mean Grade of</i>		
	85-100	70-84	50-69
I and II	51.4	48.6	00.0
III	35.5	63.2	1.3
IV	18.4	69.2	12.4
V	8.3	66.7	25.0
Total	23.8	66.3	9.9

This distribution is not a matter of chance; neither is it "normal" in the sense in which the Superintendent used the term. On the contrary, strong biases were at work. The class I and class II students received more than twice as many grades in the 85-100 category as probability indicated they would have if chance factors alone were operating. On the other hand, class V boys and girls were given about one third as many grades between 85-100 as they should have received if no bias had been present (8.3 per cent observed against 23.6 per cent expected). If

these figures are stated in terms of opportunity, it is clear that, on the average, the higher an adolescent's class position, the better his chances are to receive high grades. Conversely, the lower one's position in the prestige structure, the more likely the adolescent is to receive low grades. To be sure, a real differential factor in the home environment may be conditioning the child's response to the school situation in each class, but this does not invalidate the relationship between class and grades.

Failures are biased toward lower class pupils in an even more striking way than are grades, as the following tabulation of the 29 students who failed one or more courses in 1941-1942 shows.

Class	Number of Students	Number of Failures	Per Cent of Failures
I and II	35	1	2.9
III	146	4	2.7
IV	183	18	10.0
V	26	6	23.1
Total	390	29	7.4

When we discovered this relationship between failures and class position, we analyzed the grade records of 495 adolescents who had completed at least one semester of high school. Class II had only 1 failure; this student repeated the course. There were 8 failures in class III (5.5 per cent); 5 of the 8 repeated the course, 2 took substitutes, and 1 was in the out-of-school group. There were 63 failures in class IV (27 per cent); 38 students failed one course; 14, two; 7, three; and 4, four. Twenty-one of the 63 failures in class IV continued in school, and 42, exactly two-thirds, dropped out after they received a failing grade in one or more subjects. Of the one-third in school, 39 per cent repeated the course failed, and 61 per cent took a substitute.

Sixty-four of the 72 class V boys and girls (89 per cent) who completed one or more semesters of high school had failed one or more courses; 62 of the 64 left school the sub-

sequent semester, the two exceptions being freshman girls who took a substitute course. Thus, no class V adolescent repeated a course.

Is failure in the lower classes linked with lack of intellectual capacity? We tried to answer this question objectively by comparing intelligence test scores with class position. *The Otis Group Intelligence Test, Advanced Examination: Form A* was given to all students by the high school principal shortly after they enrolled. The scores 507 adolescents made on this test were obtained. These intelligence quotients averaged considerably higher than the general population of the United States, as the following comparison shows.

I.Q. Range	Elmtown		General Population
	Number	Per Cent	Per Cent
120-139	38	7.5	9.0
111-119	180	35.5	16.0
91-110	269	53.0	50.0
70-90	20	4.0	23.0
Total	507	100.0	98.0

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Elmtown sample has a slightly lower percentage in the 120-and-above category than the general population, but more than twice as high a percentage in the 111-to-119 range, and only about one sixth as many in the 70-90 group. If we assume that those with an I.Q. below 90 were unable to do high school work, a very doubtful assumption, then there were only 20 with this arbitrarily asserted inability. Eighteen of the 20 belonged to classes IV and V, as Table I shows.

TABLE I
INTELLIGENCE TEST SCORES BY CLASS

I.Q.	Class			
	I and II	III	IV	V
120-139	8	19	11	0
111-119	15	72	82	11
91-110	12	59	128	70
70-90	0	2	8	10
Total	35	152	229	91

In so far as class V was involved, only 11 per cent of the adolescents for whom we had scores had an I.Q. below 90, but 89 per cent of those who completed a semester or more of high school failed at least one course. Although intelligence was associated significantly with class position, the degree of association was not high enough to account for the concentration of failures in class V. Neither was it great enough to attribute the high grades in classes I and II to the intellectual capacity of this prestige level.

Behind the stark figures of grades received in courses and scores made on intelligence tests lies the Elmtown social system. The culture complex associated with classes I, II, and III trains boys and girls to respond positively to competitive situations such as that presented by examinations and intelligence tests. Experience imbues them with a need for personal achievement that is expressed in their constant search for success, teaching them from infancy to face each new situation aggressively and to overcome it to the best of their ability. When they take a test, whether it is arithmetic or intelligence, they normally try to do their best on it, for their ego is on trial and they must make good, and they generally do. On the other hand, the class V adolescent has been subjected to a family and class culture in which failure, worry, and frustration are common. He has not been trained at home to do his best in school. His parents have not ingrained in him the idea that he must make good grades if he is to be a success in life. Moreover, the class system as it functions in the school does not help him to overcome the poor training he has received at home and in the neighborhood. We believe that such factors as these have as much influence on the differences observed in the test scores as "native intelligence," but this is essentially an impression—an impression, however, based on evidence accumulated in Elmtown.

* * *

In the Elmtown social system the school is used on occasion by ambitious parents to further their own designs. The two upper classes

generally assume that good grades, school prizes, student offices, and prominence in scholastic affairs are their natural due. New teachers soon learn from their associations with other teachers, townspeople, parents, and adolescents "who is who" and what one should or should not do to avoid trouble. Trouble, a constant fear among the high school teachers, takes many forms which range from adverse reports by students to their parents to threats in Board meetings to dismiss so-and-so for such-and-such. Teachers, if they are successful, act judiciously in their relations with the children of the powerful; on appropriate occasions they look the other way. Teachers experienced in the system warn newcomers about this boy or that girl. Narratives, gossip, a hint here, a warning there, remarks in faculty meetings, give the teacher some understanding of the situation.

When controls implicit in the class system do not suffice to give persons in the two higher classes what they desire for their children, direct pressures are applied. A family struggling to maintain favorable prestige relies upon the children to bring home good grades, and, if the family is in a position to exert pressure on the school, it sees that they do receive high grades. Dozens of stories were told by Elmtowners of occurrences of this kind, not once or twice, but repeatedly. Two members of the Board were accused of bringing direct pressure on certain teachers to give their children high grades. Another member suggested that the President of the Board fire a certain teacher because he had made his daughter stay after school to complete an assignment.

It is believed widely in classes IV and V, and to a somewhat lesser extent in class III, that the grades a student receives are determined by the position of his parents in the social structure rather than by his ability or his industriousness. This belief is not without foundation, as is generally the case when one encounters a persistent belief illustrated by one story after another, over a number of years of questionable grading practices in relation to the children of prominent families.

WHO PARTICIPATES IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES?

Twenty-three extracurricular activities that range from organized athletics to the school paper are supported actively by the student body. Potentially a boy can belong to eleven different organizations and a girl to twelve. In spite of the number of activities and the wide range of interests they represent, one student out of three does not participate in any extracurricular activity. The percentage of participation or non-participation is associated very strongly with class position, as the following tabulation shows:

<i>Class</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Non-Participation</i>
I and II	100.0	00.0
III	75.3	24.7
IV	57.4	42.6
V	27.0	73.0
Total	65.9	34.1

Adolescents from the higher classes are in far more activities than those from the lower classes, and the girls are in more than the boys. Eighteen girls are in six or seven activities. Nine of the 18 come from class II, 6 from class III, and 3 from class IV. Since there are only 14 girls in class II, but 73 in class III, and 111 in class IV, it is easy to see that a much higher proportion of class II girls enter as many activities as they desire and give the impression to the other girls that "they are in everything" as they, indeed, tend to be. The hyperactive class III girls represent only 9 per cent of the girls in this class, moreover, they tend to be scattered in more activities so their presence in an activity is not so conspicuous. The three class IV girls in either six or seven activities represent less than 4 per cent of the girls in the class; therefore, the roles they play are really different from those the average girl in this stratum plays. Boys do not become involved in as many activities as girls. No boy participates in more than four, and only two are in this many—one a class II, the other a class IV

member. The class II boys average almost twice as many activities as the class III boys, as Table II shows.

TABLE II
MEAN NUMBER OF EXTRACURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED IN
BY SEX AND CLASS

<i>Class</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
I and II	1.8	3.9
III	1.1	2.0
IV	0.8	1.0
V	0.6	0.1
Total	1.0	1.4

Participation in all extracurricular activities, except boys' athletics, is biased in favor of some classes and against others. Moreover, each club is class-graded. For example, the Home Makers' Club is composed predominantly of class IV girls (60 per cent). Class II girls avoid it; two, or 4 per cent, of the membership, are in it. The French Club, in contrast, is essentially a class II group, 60 per cent, whereas only 2 class IV girls belong to it. The Library Club is weighted heavily with class III's, 71 per cent. The Future Farmers of America is its counterpart among the boys—60 per cent from Class III.

A class IV girl summarized the effect of the class system in the high school on the lower ranking boys and girls, in so far as it pertains to extracurricular activities, when she said:

Frankly, for a lot of us there is nothing here but just going to classes, listening to the teacher, reciting, studying, and going home again. We are pushed out of things. There is a group of girls here who think they are higher than us. They look down on us. I won't mention any names, but they are a group of girls from the higher families. They have a club that is supposed to be outside of school, but it's really in the school. They just go from one club to the other and hog all of the offices. They're in all the activities. They talk about what they're doing, what they're going to do, and

they won't pay any attention to us. They snub us and they won't talk to us. Some of them will speak to us sometimes, but most of the time they just ignore us. I'd like to be in the school activities and the school plays, go to the dances, and things like that, but they make us feel like we're not wanted. I went to some of the activities when I first started high school. Last year, I was in the Home Makers' and the Cheer Club, but they ignored me. Now I'm not in anything. If we go to the high school dances, nobody will dance with us. They

dance among themselves and have a good time and we're nobody. If we go to the football games, it's the same way. Those Cheer Club girls are supposed to sit together at a game and root, but they don't. They break up into little groups and, if you're not in one of the groups, you're left out of things.

As she said this, she turned her palms upward, shrugged her shoulders and said, "Well, why go? We're made to feel out of place and that's the way it is."

44 • Class Bias in the "Midwest" School

Many persons believe that Warner and his associates have exaggerated—if, indeed, they have not imagined—the middle-class bias of the school. This point of view receives some support from the study of the "Midwest" school, by the psychologists Roger Barker, Herbert Wright, Jack Nall, and Phil Schoggen. These authors report in the following passage that they could find no evidence of class bias in the school in "Midwest."

We must ask ourselves, therefore, whether "Elmtown" or "Midwest" is more typical of the public school throughout the nation. At the present time, we simply do not have the evidence required to answer the question conclusively. In this situation we can profitably draw on our own experience and that of our friends and associates in considering this problem. A careful reading of the following selection, however, reveals the authors' opinion that the lack of class bias in the "Midwest" school can be explained by conditions which would not prevail except in a small village community.

It is interesting and somewhat disturbing to find that Barker and his coworkers apparently believe that the lack of professional training characteristic of the "Midwest" teachers has resulted in "wider values and a greater tolerance of individual difference than is frequently found among professional educators."

A major question is this: Does the Midwest school promote the values and teach the skills of a limited section of the class structure of the town? Does the school have a class bias? The members of the School Board of Midwest are of Classes I and II; the teachers are

[From Roger G. Barker *et al.*, "There Is No Class Bias in Our School," *Progressive Education*, 27 (Feb. 1950): 109-110. Reprinted by permission of the authors and *Progressive Education*. For a description of Midwest, see Chapter 5.]

predominantly of Class II. The class positions of the grade school children and their parents is given in the tabulation below.

<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>School Children</i>
I	15	12
II	38	27
III	25	25

Although the school board members have a higher class position than either the teachers or the pupils and their families, they exert little class biased influence over the school. This is true for a number of reasons. First, there is little disagreement between the social classes of Midwest as to the functions and the functioning of the school in the community. Class I parents do not aspire to different educational opportunities for their children than do Class II and Class III parents. This is exemplified by the fact that no children of Midwest are sent to private schools or summer camps.

A second reason why there is little class bias in the Midwest school arises from the professional and class position of the teachers. The teachers of Midwest are predominantly in Class II, but they have close connections with both Class I and Class III. Class II people generally support the official ideology that class distinctions are undesirable and are to be combatted. There are indications that this view is strong among the teachers. Midwest's teachers have the inclination and are in a position to act as buffers against possible undue pressures from either Class I or Class III. They have the strength to do this, too.

For one thing, teaching in Midwest is not highly professionalized. The teachers are not members of a close, isolated, insecure professional group with strong attachments to academic and upper class values. Not a single teacher is a member of the NEA, and until the new superintendent provided the leadership, no teacher of Midwest had attended a refresher course for years. The three classroom teachers are married women; two of them live on farms. Two of the three specialized teachers of music and athletics are men,

one of whom has extra-curricular farming interests. The teachers of Midwest are not heavily dependent upon professional status for security and satisfactions; most of them are firmly established in the community independently of their professional position as teachers. Furthermore few if any Midwest teachers are using the teaching profession as a ladder on which to reach higher class positions. Most of them are solid, middle aged citizens with the independence to stand up for their convictions.

Besides providing strength, lack of professionalization and lack of social mobility appear to lead to wider values and a greater tolerance of individual differences than is frequently found among professional educators. While Mrs. Arnold is concerned about the poor reading of sixth-grader David, she does not see his life as ruined by this deficiency; she sees his qualities of physical strength, reliability, initiative, and skill with animals as likely to make him an excellent farmer—an occupation which she fully approves. The teachers of Midwest do not have the technical security many would consider desirable. All of them are relatively unsophisticated in technical, pedagogical matters. On the other hand, they have a wide scale of values and a broad tolerance that are unfortunately often lacking in highly professionalized teachers.

Whatever the limitations of Midwest's teachers, they do not represent any particular class or a classless professional group within the community. If the function of teachers is to create anxieties in pupils and to set them on a quest for social mobility, Midwest teachers do a poor job. On the other hand, if the function of teachers is to teach children the values and skills of a wide sector of the community, Midwest's teachers do a good job.

Another factor that operates to reduce class pressures in Midwest's school is the intimate knowledge many teachers have of each pupil. Three of the six teachers have lived in the community or the neighborhood for many years. There is available to them, and to the newer teachers as well, an extensive "cumulative record" on most children. This record is found in the community communication

network; it consists of anecdotes, family background material, and reputation data. Although some of it is not reliable, much of it can be verified by independent observers and judges.

The children of Midwest are not strangers to their teachers. This factor can hardly be overemphasized. Studies in social perception indicate that upon brief acquaintance an individual is perceived in accordance with such superficial features as his physique, his dress, his gestures, his language, etc., all of which are highly class determined. Upon further acquaintance, surface features lose their significance for perception and persons are seen in accordance with deeper personality and character traits. Studies of race relations, for example, have shown that initial contacts often lead to generalized, superficial, biased perception of racial groups, while intimate, personal contacts with individuals of the same races are governed by entirely different perceptual cases. This mechanism operates in all inter-personal contacts.

The teacher who has brief contacts with many children will inevitably behave toward them in accordance with easily perceived surface characteristics. One such prominent characteristic is the class position of the child. On the other hand the teacher who knows a child and his background well, will inevitably behave toward him more in accordance with his deeper behavior characteristics. No matter what the class biases of Midwest teachers might be, it is inevitable that they should be less influential in guiding the teachers' reactions to children than in a larger school where teacher-pupil contacts are necessarily more superficial.

Finally, the smallness of the school provides a strong deterrent to incipient class-biased influences. The full program of school activities requires the participation of almost every child. The Midwest school does not have the resources to be as selective as it might wish to be. Like the community, the school requires wide participation by its members. This necessitates the acceptance of widely differing children, not only with respect to social class, but with respect to age, sex, and ability as

well. There are no segregated classes in Midwest or in its school. The children begin early to adjust to the realities of human differences.

For these and other reasons, it is difficult to find evidence that privileges are bestowed in the Midwest school according to class level. An inventory of the children who were placed in positions of leadership or honor throughout a year is as follows:

<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Positions of Prestige</i>
I	15
II	26
III	39
Negro	3

The stage which Midwest provides for its children to play their parts upon is not different, in principle, from that provided by larger, more complicated communities. It provides the same kinds of conditions as they, including social classes. However, Midwest's stage is smaller and its settings less numerous and varied. This does not mean that life is less stimulating and rich for Midwest children than for city children. In fact the contrary appears to be true. Midwest children not only have the run of the stage but are pressed to act in most of its settings. When the company of actors is small, each must play more than one part. Meagerness and dullness enter a child's world when the stage becomes so large and complex that his life can encompass only one or a few of its diverse settings, making segregation, selectivity and specialization necessary. Meagerness and dullness occur, also, when the community is so homogeneous as to lack stimulating diversity. We do not know what degree of community differentiation is maximally effective, but the town of Midwest cannot be far from this point for grade school children. Our observations suggest that the social classes of Midwest by providing one kind of variety enrich the lives of its children and contribute toward their democratic socialization. There is more than a grain of truth in the widespread belief that the Midwests of America contribute valued characteristics to the American outlook and the American personality. It is an impor-

tant research problem to determine more exactly the sources of these contributions. It is not unlikely that the paradoxical relation between the community class structure and the classlessness of the individual's experiences during development is important here.

45 • Class Bias in Intelligence Tests

We have noted that the tendency of many lower-class pupils to withdraw from school is usually explained on the ground that these young people lack the ability to do good school work. That this explanation is not entirely true was shown by evidence cited in Selection 38. Nevertheless, as measured by intelligence tests, the academic ability of the average high-school graduate does exceed that of about 85 percent of those who drop out of school before graduation.* Eckert and Marshall, after noting this fact, go on to say:

These differences are not surprising in view of the fact that such tests have been constructed to predict success in academic work; they simply show that the schools of the State have ordinarily made provision for only one type of excellence. Pupils whose strengths may lie in other directions do not fit well in a scheme of education that stakes everything on the success of boys and girls in a series of written examinations.†

Thus these authors align themselves with the position taken by Hand in Selection 37.

But Allison Davis, in the following passage, more directly attacks the customary explanation for the large percentage of dropouts among lower-class boys and girls. For Davis asserts that most intelligence tests are strongly biased against lower-class children. In order to understand his argument, it is necessary to recall that intelligence tests measure not native ability but learned behavior. The theory is that these tests *are* measures of native ability, because everyone has had an equal opportunity to learn the items selected for inclusion. It is precisely this theory that Davis attacks. He claims that many of the test items in most of our intelligence tests are based upon middle-class culture. Hence middle-class boys and girls have had ample opportunity to familiarize themselves with these items, but lower-class boys and girls have not.

At the present time, Davis' position in this matter is unacceptable to many psychologists. It has been suggested that his work, and that of his colleagues, in the field of mental testing is based on the unacknowledged assumption that there are no significant differences in intelligence among these large class groups. Hence, it is claimed, they have simply rejected all items that reveal such differences. Again, we do not yet possess the evidence required to resolve the issue conclusively. But Davis' arguments certainly

* Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas A. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School*, McGraw-Hill, 1939, p. 50.

† *Ibid.*, p. 51.

demand serious attention. Thirty years ago many psychologists held, on the basis of intelligence tests, that racial groups differed significantly in *native* intelligence. Since that time, it has been generally concluded that these apparent differences were largely caused by differences in cultural environments. There is a selective factor—due to social mobility—in social classes that is not present in ethnic groups. Nevertheless, it is necessary to be exceedingly careful in making judgments about the comparative native intelligence of social groups when these groups have been subjected to very different cultural environments.

It is hardly necessary to add that Davis' conclusions, if they are confirmed, are highly important, for they would compel a thorough re-examination of the thesis that the relative failure of lower-class children to do well in school is the natural result of poor native capacity. Indeed, they might do much more. If it should be demonstrated that there is no significant difference in the native intelligence of lower-class and middle-class children, the moral justifications for the entire system of social classes might be enormously weakened.

Recent research indicates that many slum children, who do poorly in school and on present intelligence tests, have higher real (or native) intelligence than many individuals whose home training enables them to do well on school-types of learning. Thus to measure real intelligence we need tests which will not be based primarily upon school-training and school-problems.

The previous test-makers have felt that the quickest way to predict a person's chances for success in school or college was to test him with school-type problems—not with exactly the same problems which he had studied in school, but with problems very similar to school problems, and whose solution was greatly aided by school training. The result has been to make the tests useless for measuring real intelligence in the lower socio-economic groups. "Identical" twins have exactly the same hereditary (innate) intelligence. Yet on the present tests, as Professors Newman, Freeman, and Holzinger found at the University of Chicago some years ago, identical

twins show a marked difference in their "I.Q.'s" whenever one twin has been reared in a well-to-do home, and his identical twin has been reared in a working family. The tests always define the particular twin reared in the lower socio-economic group as "less intelligent." But in fact, their innate (hereditary) intelligence is exactly the same, we know! Thus the best scientific test has made it clear that the differences in schooling and social environment between the middle and lower socio-economic groups account for the difference between their average "I.Q.'s" on the present tests.

Because these present tests are limited to school-type problems, they fail to tap many important kinds of mental ability. The present tests assume, in fact, a static American society, and a static school curriculum. They predict only those mental activities which are necessary for success in the present narrow kinds of school subjects. The present types of intelligence tests have been "validated" with respect to a school curriculum whose basic

[From Allison Davis, "Education for the Conservation of Human Resources," *Progressive Education*, 27 (May 1950): 221-224. Reprinted by permission of the author and *Progressive Education*.]

activities were set up many generations ago, a curriculum which is recognized by educators to be overacademic, trite, and virtually static.

Modern civilization, however, by its very nature requires the constant development of abilities and types of skills, far broader than those emphasized at any school. Our society is changing rapidly; we do not know, therefore, what kinds of mental skills may be required of the average American a decade ahead. The Army, for instance, had to demand a quite new pattern of abilities and skills of its infantry and "cavalry" during the last war. The public school, therefore, in a country which, like ours requires increasing productiveness, must aim to discover many kinds of talent in its pupils and to develop these different abilities by training.

To aid in the search for a fair and broader test of intelligence, a group at the University of Chicago, under the chairmanship of the author, have been carefully studying for the last five years the present intelligence tests, problem by problem. They have also experimented with pupils from the highest socio-economic levels, and with pupils from the lowest socio-economic groups, in order to learn how to measure real intelligence, apart from training. The results are dramatic in many cases.

First, with the help of Dr. Kenneth Bells, we studied ten of the most popular "group-tests of intelligence." We found that in every one of these ten, which included the intelligence-tests most widely used in public schools, a large proportion of the problems were answered correctly more often by pupils from the higher socio-economic groups than by those from the lowest income groups. On seven of the ten tests, more than seventy per cent of the problems showed the upper socio-economic group "superior." On four of the ten tests the higher socio-economic groups did better on ninety per cent of the problems. Not one of these tests, moreover, included any problem on which the lower socio-economic group came out superior to the higher socio-economic group.

This socio-economic bias in present intel-

ligence tests may be illustrated by one problem which required the student to know the term, "sonata"—a word which clearly will be heard more frequently in homes of the higher socio-economic groups. On this problem, seventy-eight per cent of the higher socio-economic group got the correct answer, but only twenty-eight per cent of the lower socio-economic group answered correctly!

REMOVING CULTURAL BIAS

Soon we began to experiment with various methods of removing this cultural bias from the present kinds of test questions. Our aim was to use only such words, grammatical construction, and situations as were about equally common in the environments of all socio-economic groups. For scientific standards require that, if we wish to measure real, native intelligence, it is absolutely essential that the environmental element (i.e., the training obtained by the child in the home or school on such problems) should be about the same for all socio-economic groups. That is to say, one must find problems on which all individuals taking the test have had approximately the same amount of training and experience. Otherwise, one cannot measure real intelligence.

First, with the advice and help of Professor Ernest A. Haggard, we experimented by using quite familiar words and situations, while keeping the basic mental activity the same as in the original test problem. We worked on the main types of problems used in the present tests. These types are:

1. *Analogies* (such as "Finger is to hand as toe is to what?")
2. *Opposites* (such as "What is the opposite of intelligent?")
3. *Similarities* (such as "What word does not belong with the others—avocado; pomegranate; persimmon; broccoli?")

Then we expressed these same types of mental problems in more familiar words and experiences.

In many cases, a startling increase in the

intelligence-rating of the lower socio-economic group resulted. One of the two most difficult types of verbal problem for the lower socio-economic group on the present tests, had been analogies. We took a problem like this:

A symphony is to a composer as a book is to
☐ paper ☐ sculptor ☐ author
☐ musician ☐ man

and made it

A baker goes with bread as a carpenter goes with

☐ a saw ☐ a house ☐ a spoon
☐ a nail ☐ a man

We then gave both socio-economic groups practice on similar problems, and offered a movie ticket for good work on both the old and the new problems. Both groups, therefore, had the same practice and same promise of a reward.

We actually found that our new problem, using fair and simple words, such as "baker," "spoon," "nail," was a tougher intellectual problem for *both* the high and the low socio-economic groups. Our problem was *much more difficult for both groups* and therefore a better test of ability.

In addition, we also found that there was no difference in the percentage of the upper and lower socio-economic groups who answered our problem correctly. On the present-test problem about "symphony, composer," etc., eighty-one per cent of the upper socio-economic group answered correctly, while only fifty-two per cent of the lower group were correct. We were able to remove the socio-economic bias in this type of problem, for fifty per cent of each group answered our problem correctly.

We found this same kind of improvement in the lower socio-economic group, whether we experimented with young children, or with those of high-school age; whether we tested white slum children, colored slum children, or foreign-background groups. The cultural bias in the present tests works in the same way for all colors, nationality-groups, and ages

The hardest kind of intelligence-test problem has been the syllogism, such as:

A is shorter than B
 B is shorter than C. Therefore,
☐ B is taller than C
☐ A is as tall as B or C
☐ A is shorter than C.

The last choice, of course is correct. We changed this type of problem and gave the same practice and reward to both socio-economic levels on both problems. Our new problem read,

Jim can hit harder than Bill. Bill can hit harder than Ted, so which is true?
☐ Ted can hit harder than Bill
☐ Bill can hit as hard as Jim and Ted
☐ Jim can hit harder than Ted

Of course, the last choice is correct.

On the type of syllogism in the present tests, sixty-seven per cent of the higher socio-economic group, but only forty-five per cent of the lower group got the correct answer. On our problem, there was no significant difference between the percentages correct in the two socio-economic groups. Yet we kept the basic mental problem in our version exactly the same as in the "standard" tests.

To clinch our case—now that we knew how to *remove the cultural bias* from the present test problems—we checked our work by seeing whether we could deliberately make a problem much harder for the lower socio-economic group—whether, that is, we could "prove" that the lower socio-economic group was "inferior" in intelligence. So we took a problem like this from the present tests,

A person who by mistake hits another person should
☐ say he did not ☐ forget it
☐ say nothing ☐ leave
☐ beg pardon

To make this problem unfair to the lower socio-economic group by introducing a verbal and cultural bias, Davis and Haggard made it read,

A child who unintentionally injures another child should

() *deny it* () *make amends* () *flee*
() *be reticent* () *ignore it*

By using *unfamiliar* "literary" language, and making reading as well as vocabulary very important in the solution of our problem, we discriminated very severely against the lower socio-economic group. On the answers to the first problem, there was a difference between the two socio-economic groups of only twelve percentage points. On the problem which we experimentally made less familiar to the lower socio-economic group, they came out thirty-two percentage points below the upper socio-economic group.

Yet the basic mental problem, apart from the language used, was the same in both questions. The difference between them was

merely a verbal one, that between familiar Anglo-Saxon words and fancy "literary" words.

Thus we demonstrated the familiar technique used by test-makers for making problems "harder," which is nothing more than a technique of resorting to obscure words and situations, in order to get problems which will "weed out" a great many of the individuals "tested." But we now know that such test-problems employ an artifact to "weed out" the "smart" from the "dumb." They use chiefly those words, situations, pictures, and experiences which are much more familiar to individuals who have grown up in the middle and upper socio-economic groups. Thus the present tests measure the cultural and economic opportunities which the child or adult has had; they do not measure his real intelligence.

46 • The Need for Curriculum Reforms

In the following selection, Allison Davis develops the position taken by Harold Hand (Selection 37) that the school must provide a curriculum adapted to the interests and needs of all of its pupils. To some extent this passage supports Davis' earlier contention that the school, as a result of its middle-class orientation, severely limits the educational opportunities of the lower-class boy and girl. But it also suggests that the present curriculum is too narrow to develop many of the abilities necessary to attainment even in the middle-class culture.

According to Davis, the central educational value represented by the current curriculum of the school is verbal comprehension and fluency. He grants that children must be taught to read. But he objects to the emphasis now placed upon reading because he believes that reading stimulates only a narrow range of thought processes. As Davis sees it, the pupil is in school in order that he may "learn how to think, to develop his reason, his insight, his invention, his imagination." This he can do best through analyzing of his own experience and so learning to draw correct inferences from it. Thus, although Davis does not believe that reading, at least in the early years of school, is the primary medium of education, he does advocate an essentially intellectual conception of the educational process.

As suggested earlier in the chapter, at some point in your study, you should examine the view presented here in relation to the various conceptions of the social function of education presented in Chapter 12.

Just as the culture of a particular social-class group influences the emotional system of the human individual reared in that group, so does that culture likewise guide his mental activities.

* * *

The present intelligence tests offer one of many instances, to be found in the public schools, of the arbitrary restriction of the goals of the pupils' learning to a very narrow range of activities. The people who devise and teach the curricula of the public schools are nearly all middle class. More than 95 per cent of the teachers in the communities in New England, the deep South, and the Midwest . . . are middle class. Like any particular culture, that of the middle class emphasizes a rather narrow range of mental abilities and problems.

The culture of the school, therefore, selects only mental problems which are highly valued in middle-class life, and which appear to provide adaptive training for those who wish to learn the skills and values of the adult culture. If we wish to train a wide range of mental activities in the pupil, however, we need to ask ourselves at least the following questions:

1. Does the public school emphasize a range of mental problems and skills which is too narrow to develop most of the abilities necessary for attainment even in middle-class culture itself?

2. Does the public school select a range of mental problems and skills which is so narrow that the school fails to develop much of the mental potential of lower-class pupils?

* * *

From his middle-class culture, learned from his parents, teachers, and friends, both the teacher and the professor of education have learned to regard certain mental interests and

skills, certain moral values, as the "best," or "most cultured," or "most intelligent." Granted that, for this society, the basic *moral* values of middle-class people may be the most adaptive for survival, it does not follow that present-day middle-class academic skills and goals are most effective in developing the intellectual, imaginative, and problem-solving activities of human beings.

The school culture itself is a narrow selection of a few highly traditional activities and skills, arbitrarily taken from middle-class culture as a broader whole. To cite a case, the skills most highly valued by middle-class people are verbal comprehension and fluency. It is probable, however, that these skills do not require very high-level mental ability for those who live in either upper-middle-class or upper-class culture. Verbal tasks probably lie somewhere about at mid-point of the difficulty-range of intellectual skills. Many types of invention, of creativeness, of analytical organization, and indeed of symbolic manipulation are certainly more rare and more valuable to mankind than is skill in standard English, or standard French, or standard German.

* * *

Just as we have been taught by our narrow academic culture both to stereotype our intelligence-test problems, and to accord the highest educational value to linguistic training, so also we have been led by scholastic culture to overrate reading as a means of developing mental processes. Reading is made the basis of the child's mental training in the first school years. Upon this basis he is usually segregated into one of the classroom's or the school's homogeneous "ability-groups." Through his early classroom experiences in learning to read, and through the accompanying prestige or stigma he meets in the classroom, the child's basic concept of his mental adequacy is learned.

[From Allison Davis, *Social Class Influences upon Learning*, Harvard University Press, copyright 1948 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, pp. 38, 88-95, 97-100.

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Does reading deserve this high place in the first three or four years of schooling? My observations and interviews in nearly five hundred classrooms during the last four years lead me to doubt that reading helps the young child learn to solve the more basic types of mental problems. In our schools, reading consists chiefly of learning to recognize written symbols, to pronounce them, and to paraphrase them. These trainings are carried on in the classroom day in and day out, year after year, and receive greatest emphasis from the teacher. Yet it seems clear to me that they stimulate only a very narrow range of thought-processes.

The hypotheses to be tested by research upon reading include first those having to do with concept-formation. Does his reading in school help the young child to learn most of his words and most of his concepts? Does not the school practice in reading concern itself chiefly with the learning of symbols and the ordering of symbols? If this is true, does this undue emphasis upon symbols result from the fact that other types of experience in the classroom are too limited to develop most areas of concept-formation and reasoning?

The second group of hypotheses concerns the experiences symbolized by the written signs which the child learns to read in school. We have only to look at the books used in the first three or four grades to recognize that the experiences symbolized are far more simple than those which the child has already met in his daily life. In the first grade, he learns to read "I see the boy" long after he has learned to speak and to think in complex-compound sentences, or to outwit his father or mother in family arguments, or to solve some problems in intelligence tests which his parents cannot solve! The same child who has to spend months learning to recognize those types of verbal symbols which give children most trouble—the symbols for abstract experiences, pronouns, and verbal auxiliaries—has already been speaking and understanding these same words in conversation for years!

Now it is well and necessary for a six-year-

old to learn to read the written symbols, "I see a cat" or "Mary went to Grandmother's house." He must learn to recognize the written symbols sooner or later. But scientists and teachers must not therefore conclude that this task should be the prime endeavor of his first years in school. He is in school primarily to learn how to think, to develop his reason, his insight, his invention, his imagination.

The academic function of the school is to help the child learn how to solve a wide range of mental problems. Of how much value is reading in helping the young child learn to solve mental problems? In the simple stories which he reads and paraphrases, all the problems except those of vocabulary, word recognition, and syntax are solved for him by the writer. He learns a new and important concept only once in a blue moon from his primer; even then, he learns it chiefly by memory and by simple association. In other words, there is little chance for the child to learn to recognize, to define, and to analyze problems in any exploratory or empirical way in reading; in his primer, he simply learns to decode someone's thoughts about a cat, or a grandmother, or a circus, or a trip to the country.

One must recognize, therefore, that the experiences symbolized in the child's books usually do not interest him. The stories seem foolish to lower-class children because the experiences appear unreal, the words strange. To the middle-class child, the drive of seeking his parents' and teacher's approval is usually strong enough to keep him trying, but not strong enough to make him *like* reading. Since the stories are written chiefly to teach certain words, and are organized, therefore, around the repetition of these words, they make little sense as a view of reality to the middle-class child, either.

Thus reading fails to give pupils any great skill in solving problems (1) because it limits its problems largely to purely verbal ones, and (2) because its problems are felt by the pupil to have little importance in his life outside the school.

The basic criticism of the school's great em-

phasis upon reading, therefore, is this: Reading teaches too little skill in problem-solving (either of a rational, empirical, or inventive kind) to justify the first place it holds in the curriculum. Learning the skill of decoding written communication is important, but not so important for the development of mental ability as the pupil's analysis of his own experience, and his drawing of correct inferences from this analysis. How often does one observe curriculum activities which guide this kind of learning?

• • •

All our findings point to the same conclusion: The greatest need of education is for intensive research to discover the best curricula for developing children's basic mental activities; such activities, that is, as the analysis and organization of observed experiences, the drawing of inferences, the development of inventiveness. The present curricula are stereotyped and arbitrary selections from a narrow area of middle-class culture. Academic culture is one of the most conservative and ritualized aspects of human culture. Its formalization, its lack of functional connection with the daily problems of life, has given a bloodless, fossilized character to the classroom which all of us recognize. For over a generation, no basically new types of mental problems have been added to intelligence tests. For untold generations, we have been unable to think of anything to put into the curriculum which will be more helpful in guiding the basic mental development of children than vocabulary-building, reading, spelling, and routine arithmetical memorizing. Even as we read this, many of us will think it absurd to suppose that reading and arithmetic are not the best activities for teaching children to solve mental problems.

Let us ask ourselves this simple question, however. What proportion of the *basic mental problems* met by children (and by adults for that matter) in their daily life can be solved by having a large standard vocabulary, or skill in reading, or skill in arithmetical

processes? Do these trainings teach a human being correct habits of making inferences or of gaining insight about most of the difficult mental problems which he faces? Does one observe in more than one out of twenty public-school classrooms any activities which help children to learn how to reason, to analyze, to invent; or does one observe instead activities of memorizing, of learning symbols, of reading or listening to predigested solutions by other people, and of paraphrasing ("telling the meaning") of other people's words? Most observers would find the latter.

Indeed, the most important inference to be made from the studies briefly reported in this paper, dealing with the socialization and mental activities of children, is that most of our efforts to revise the curricula of the public schools have been superficial. To make the schools a place where children may learn to analyze facts, to reason from them, to develop insight and inventiveness, we need far more than a systematic method for teaching words or numbers. Those attempts, moreover, which start with sweeping generalizations about reality, or community experiences, and other such goals all start at the wrong end of the learning sequence.

We need to start with simple situations, drawn from the daily life of the pupil. As yet, we do not know what these situations are. We do not know how to use them to guide the drawing of inferences, the processes of reasoning. All we know is that they must be very explicit and short sequences of acts, so that the learner may actually infer the relationship between specific events. The situations must also be chosen from the common life of all the pupils, so that the problems will motivate all social classes. Finally, these curriculum-experiences must be intensive, not vague and general; they must be at the molecular level of analysis, so that the child may carry a problem through all the detailed steps to the solution. Yet they will be simple and realistic problems.

Those who revise the curriculum in this intensive way will change the whole course of human education in our society.

47 • Discrimination Through Segregated Schools

In some parts of the nation, the law has required the maintenance of separate schools for Negro and white students. In other parts of the country, particularly in large towns and cities, the same objective has, to a large extent, been achieved through residential segregation. When this practice has been recognized by law, it has been justified by the doctrine of "separate but equal" facilities.

In the past, however, the equality implied by this doctrine was often a myth. The following selection, by Gunnar Myrdal, graphically depicts the differences, in 1935-1936, between the educational facilities provided for Negro and for white students in segregated districts. Myrdal notes, however, that by 1935-1936 a gradual improvement in Negro schools was evident throughout the South. In fact, he suggests that the improvement in Negro schools was probably more rapid than in white schools during the same period.

There are no financial statistics for the North which separate the amount spent on the education of Negroes from the amount spent on the education of whites. In the North, the principle is not questioned that schools should have equal standards, independent of whether a school is all white, all Negro or mixed. It is mainly the Negroes' poverty which keeps them from utilizing existing educational facilities as much as do whites. In fact, were it not for this reason, the Northern Negroes would on the average be better off than the Northern whites, since Negroes are more concentrated in the big cities where school facilities are superior to large parts of the rural North where only white people live. In actual practice, however, schools in needy districts tend to be somewhat older, less well equipped and often more overcrowded. A main cause of this is the migration of Negroes from the South to the slum areas of Northern cities. European immigrants who come to these slum areas also have inferior schools. School facilities have not been adjusted to the rapidly growing need. The city authorities who know

about the much more inadequate school facilities for Negroes in the South, and who are usually somewhat reluctant to increase the incentive for Negro migration to their localities, have often not been so active in widening school facilities in Negro districts as they would have been had the districts been white. But the differentials are seldom large and would probably disappear altogether if migration should cease.

In the South, school facilities are generally much poorer. In the year 1935-1936 the average current expenditures per pupil in daily attendance in all public elementary and secondary schools in the country was \$74. The range between the different states was extremely wide. In three Northern states, New York, Nevada, and California, the amount was over \$115. On the other hand, all the states in the Upper and Lower South, as well as some of the Border states, were far below the national average. At the bottom of the scale were Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas, where the average expenditure was less than \$30 per pupil.

Obviously, these conditions are related to

[From Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, Harper and Bros., 1944, Vol. I, pp. 337-342. Footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

the Supreme Court of Delaware adhered to that doctrine, but ordered that the plaintiffs be admitted to the white schools because of their superiority to the Negro schools.

The plaintiffs contend that segregated public schools are not "equal" and cannot be made "equal," and that hence they are deprived of the equal protection of laws.

* * *

Here, unlike *Sweatt v. Painter*, there are findings below that the Negro and white schools involved have been equalized, or are being equalized, with respect to buildings, curricula, qualifications and salaries of teachers, and other "tangible" factors.

Our decision, therefore, cannot turn on merely a comparison of these tangible factors in the Negro and white schools involved in each of the cases. We must look instead to the effect of segregation itself on public education.

In approaching this problem, we cannot turn the clock back to 1868 when the amendment was adopted, or even to 1896 when *Plessy v. Ferguson* was written. We must consider public education in the light of its full development and its present place in American life throughout the nation. Only in this way can it be determined if segregation in public schools deprives these plaintiffs of the equal protection of the laws.

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local Governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society.

It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment.

In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an educa-

tion. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

We come then to the question presented: does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does.

In *Sweatt v. Painter*, *supra*, in finding that a segregated law school for Negroes could not provide them equal educational opportunities, this court relied in large part on "those qualities which are incapable of objective measurement but which make for greatness in a law school."

In *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State regents*, *supra*, the court, in requiring that a Negro admitted to a white graduate school be treated like all other students, again resorted to intangible consideration: "... his ability to study, to engage in discussions and exchange views with other students, and, in general, to learn his profession."

Such considerations apply with added force to children in grade and high schools. To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone.

The effect of this separation on their educational opportunities was well stated by a finding in the Kansas case by a court which nevertheless felt compelled to rule against the Negro plaintiffs:

Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law; for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to retard the

educational and mental development of Negro children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racially integrated school system.

Whatever may have been the extent of psychological knowledge at the time of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, this finding is amply supported by modern authority. Any language in *Plessy v. Ferguson* contrary to this finding is rejected.

We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.

Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

49 • Combating Prejudice Through the School

In every part of the nation, ethnic-group prejudices and tensions smolder beneath the surface, at times breaking out into open hostility and public riots. At best, these prejudices are a constant affront to the dignity of man and to the ideal of equality. But they are also explosive forces which, in troubled times, are easily exploited by unscrupulous men for undemocratic ends. Speaking of group antagonisms, one of America's distinguished sociologists, R. M. MacIver, has stated that "if we really believe in a decent and free society, we must grapple with this thing, because it has been, and is becoming still more, an enemy of any free society. In short, these attitudes engendered by group concerning group form the greatest social menace to the order of our civilization."^{*}

The antagonisms to which MacIver refers, moreover, are not limited to adult society outside the school. Frequently they are found in the school itself. The approaching end of segregation in housing, in recreational areas, and in education may increase these tensions and prejudices in many parts of the nation. Recognizing this possibility, some schools have instituted programs of instruction designed to decrease intergroup prejudice. In the following passage, Gerhart Saenger discusses in considerable detail the principles that should be employed in an effective educational program of this type. Saenger is a social psychologist who has made a special study of intergroup attitudes and antagonisms.

Perhaps the most ideal place for such re-education though by no means the only one is the school. Scout groups, churches, recreational centers may easily perform a similar function, but usually occupy a smaller amount of the child's time. School gets the

* R. M. MacIver, "Group Image and Group Realities," in R. M. MacIver (ed.), *Group Relations and Group Antagonisms*, Harper, 1944, p. 6.

[From Gerhart Saenger, *The Social Psychology of Prejudice*, Harper and Bros., 1953, pp. 191-202, 204-210. Some footnotes omitted. Reprinted by permission.]

prejudiced person when he is still young and easily influenced, when economic and social factors do not play as large a role as in adulthood. The school can integrate democratic living and democratic education, provide an atmosphere where democratic living is the norm and the person is not rewarded for being prejudiced. It can strengthen the personality of the child and thus lessen his need to have recourse to prejudice now and in his later life.

The effectiveness of school education in human relations depends on the provision of adequate organization and leadership. School administrations must identify themselves with the fight against prejudice and discrimination, express their belief in democratic practices, and openly plan for the reduction of prejudice and discrimination within the limits of their power.

Unless the school administration is oriented in terms of intergroup education, really believes in it rather than pays mere lip service to the ideals of democratic education, not much progress is to be expected. In assessing school policies, we need to know the guiding philosophy of the school, whether the school board is liberal or conservative and supports democratic efforts in intergroup relations. An exhaustive study of seven major school systems by Brameld revealed that administrative policies in American school systems range from a "direct, forthright attack upon minority problems, through a twilight zone of uncertainty, to an opposite policy almost completely opposed to direct attack of any kind."¹

Even where the central administration is convinced of the necessity of a vigorous attack on the problem, administrators in lower echelons are in a position to sabotage an effective program of re-education. In one of our largest manufacturing cities with a population of more than one million inhabitants, which possessed a good philosophy of intergroup education on the top administrative level, about one half of all school "principals

believed that the best answer to the question of how to deal with the interracial issue is 'Don't bring it out.'"

Such sabotage is often rationalized by educators who say that no real problem exists in their community or neighborhood: They explain that a program of intergroup education would only bring the problem to public attention, "make children aware of racial and ethnic differences" and thus "do more harm than good." Apart from the fact that the children in such communities usually tend to be aware of ethnic cleavages and consider others not only as different but as inferior, a good program can never do any harm. It not only clarifies the extent and causes of existing differences, but also teaches the child to evaluate differences in a positive and more favorable light.

Opposition to intergroup education often renders the whole program ineffective by adopting educational programs which fail to bring the problem out into the open. A favorite technique here is the concentration on the "contributions" approach, particularly when the various minorities are discussed in terms of their past history and contributions rather than their present situation and problems. Prejudice is not tackled by discussing the biblical history of the Jews or the contributions of the Germans to the War of Independence.

* * *

No educator can accomplish much against the opposition of the community on which he is financially and politically dependent. An educational program which is too progressive for the prevailing climate of opinion may be doomed to failure. This does not mean that educators should be afraid to initiate progress. Ideally, educators should be leaders rather than followers. While the good leader will not move at a pace faster than his followers are willing to, it is his task to initiate change.

* * *

It is obvious that the success of intergroup education in the schools rests primarily on the personality of the teacher, his attitudes and

¹ T. Brameld, *Minority Problems in the Public Schools*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946, p. 240.

skills. The average teacher shares the traditional prejudice of his community. While he received more education, is often especially indoctrinated to suppress his own prejudiced attitudes in the classroom, his real sentiments may often, intentionally or unintentionally, reveal themselves in the treatment he gives to children whose economic and ethnic background differs from his own. Most teachers are majority members recruited from the lower middle class and share the basic outlooks of their group. Hence they may prefer the behavior exhibited by children coming from their own group and consider the different behavior patterns of lower class or minority children as undesirable.

* * *

Yet we should, through in-training courses, attempt at least to attack the prejudices of the teachers. Only the teacher who believes what she teaches can be really effective in reducing prejudices among her pupils. Children are influenced not so much by what is said, but by how it is said. More than adults they see through pretensions and react to people's feelings rather than words. They are sensitive to minute gestures, inflexions of the voice of the adult. The teacher of intergroup relations, therefore, must be sincerely convinced of the basic equality of different ethnic groups and not pay mere lip service to the ideals of democracy.

* * *

Of all the factors tending to limit the effectiveness of intergroup education none is more important than the existence of discrimination and segregation in the school system or the community at large. When we hear that the school which most constructively participated in Negro history week—by stressing the "similarity of all human beings" and "the contributions of all races and cultures to civilization"—was all white, we may wonder how the child reconciles his learning with the fact of segregation. Children are aware that segregation in schools, swimming pools, and dances is not voluntary and against the will of the excluded group.

To the extent that segregated patterns in

education counteract the effect of school teaching, intergroup education needs to be synchronized with the abolition of segregation and discrimination in the school system itself. We must aim not only at the discontinuation of segregation in schools and recreational activities connected with them, but also at the integration of minority personnel in the school systems both among teachers and administrators. The effect of a warm, generous, generally liked Negro teacher may be greater than that of a dozen lessons dealing with racial equality. The contributions of different cultural groups can be discussed more fruitfully in a group in which members of different national origins are present than in a more homogeneous group.

Insofar as progress may be blocked by prejudiced parents it is necessary to integrate the school program with an efficient program in adult education eliciting the help of civic organizations wherever possible.

* * *

Provided we have set the stage for successful re-education, how can we best proceed? Re-education, we found, should aim at an improvement of intergroup living, because prejudicial behavior was found to be partially rooted in disturbances of human relations. Our first task consists in taking stock of the emotional needs of the children, the extent to which prejudices prevail in the classroom situation.

* * *

In addition to studying the children's personal problems, it is also necessary to find out the hidden and open prejudices of the students. Where the teacher is familiar with the tensions existing in his class re-education can be more successful.

Having gained some insight, the next step in the process of re-education consists in the establishment of good human relations in the classroom by taking care of the problems of the individual children. A warm, sympathetic teacher can encourage the timid child and protect the child under attack. It is often possible to help the withdrawn isolated child or the child whose aggression is based on feel-

ings of inferiority and rejection, if the traumatic experiences leading to his problems have not been too deep. Many children are in need of contact with others, require to be given and receive affection. To some extent the teacher may be able to help here by giving such children special attention, encouraging them, and discussing their problems with them.

From a practical point of view a more feasible technique is the provision of contact with others through the establishment of small groups as, for example, panels entrusted with preparing material dealing with a special problem for classroom presentation. Cooperation in small groups provides all children with prolonged experiences in social interaction, permits them to accept and discharge responsibility. Rejected children who never before had an occasion to take over leadership roles are now given an opportunity to assert themselves. Through contributing to the success of the group, they tend to be accepted and hence experience closer feelings of belonging, which in turn may make it easier for them to give up some of their prejudices.

* * *

Inside and outside school, people who feel themselves attacked will not benefit from education. In 1946 Gordon Allport was called upon to give a series of eight lectures to high members of the Police Department of one of our largest cities. The city had been plagued by outbreaks of violence between juvenile members of different racial and ethnic groups and police officials were to be taught modern methods of handling racial tension.

* * *

It is easy to see how the situation invited hostility toward the instructor as well as the course, which needed expression. We saw why people are in a better position to listen and to accept criticisms after they have let off steam, expressed and defended themselves. Feeling threatened, they needed reassurance and sympathy. The teacher had to reassure them that he could and did understand their just grievances, was on their side, before he could begin

to explain that a defensive attitude did not solve the problem with which they were forced to deal.

Similar support has to be given in the classroom situation. The teacher needs to be permissive. He must show the prejudiced child that he understands him and can see how it is difficult for anyone to change opinions which he has accepted as right all his life and which he had been trained to believe.

Whenever prejudice exists in a weakened ego, the building of self-confidence and good interpersonal relations is of major importance.

* * *

Re-education succeeds best if it is group oriented rather than aiming at the conversion of the individual. We tend to depend upon the opinions of our group, like to feel that we are in accord with group opinion. Particularly the more insecure individual hates to go against the attitudes of his group. A study undertaken during World War II showed that it was easier to change food habits through group discussion and decision than through individual education. The participating housewives were more likely to change when they all had agreed upon the new way of buying and cooking.

When the group as a whole discusses the problems of prejudice without emphasizing the particular bias of the one or the other participant, the individual prejudiced member feels less under attack and finds it easier to accept the democratic message. When the group as a whole decides to give up prejudiced beliefs and to adopt new patterns of behavior the individual is likely to follow because he needs to conform in order to be accepted. Acceptance of the new idea brings with it the positive reward of group approval and is particularly strong if the individual feels that he himself took part in the group discussion and decision. He becomes emotionally identified with the change to which he contributed. For the same reason it is important that the teacher participate in such discussions only as a member of the group rather than an outside authority, as a person

who may be consulted but not as an individual who tells others what to say and believe. The final decision, the adoption of new values and attitudes, should come from the group as a result of the work of the group.

It is more difficult to change the opinion of the individual group member without achieving prior group change. The individual who would give up part of his prejudiced beliefs before the others are ready to do likewise would thereby get into conflict with majority opinion, be out of tune with the rest of the group. Particularly for the insecure person, the knowledge of such disagreement with group norms would be difficult to bear.

* * *

A change in attitudes is made possible through catharsis and the strengthening of the ego, facilitated by group support. The next step in the process of re-education consists in the discovery of the facts, to be followed by the accomplishment of greater empathy for the needs and problems of others. This process of "sensitization," showing us to what extent others are faced with the same problems as we ourselves, can finally be supplemented by the achievement of insight into prejudicial patterns of perceiving and thinking as well as our inner need for prejudice.

People remember best what they themselves discover. This is particularly true where the objective facts contradict previously held beliefs. It is much easier to disbelieve other people, teachers, experts, "who pretend to know better," than to distrust the evidence we unearthed ourselves. Sound re-education encourages the "student" to find things out for himself.

In school one may ask working committees of students to canvass the existing literature to find out more about groups about which widespread prejudices are held in their class or community. The pride of discovery will help them to accept what they have learned.

Not long ago a small New England town experienced an influx of Mexican workers. When the issue was first brought up in the fourth grade of the local school, the children were encouraged to express their opinions

freely. Class consensus was that they were "strange," "funny," and "did not belong in Westfield." Asked why they thought so, the children replied that they "could not speak English," "wore mustaches," "needed haircuts," "played guitars," were "brown skinned," "lived in dirty quarters."

By and by the teacher asked them whether these were good enough reasons to look down on them, where they had obtained their information, and why they wore blankets to church or lived in undesirable quarters. The discussion revealed to the children that they were unfamiliar with the reasons for the behavior of the Mexicans. They discovered that many beliefs proved to be hearsay or insufficiently documented. "Slowly their laughing and giggling subsided and they became more thoughtful when they found out how little they really knew." Those who still contended that they could make the derogatory judgments they had advanced were asked further questions. "Are Mexicans the only ones who drink? Do others need haircuts besides the Mexicans? What is funny about playing a guitar? Do all people in Westfield speak English? Why do you speak English?" were among the main questions asked.

As the result of such skillful stimulation the class spontaneously asked for more information and decided to orient the social studies course around Mexico and the Mexicans. The authors report that the children were now much more impressed with the likeness rather than the difference, tended to admire rather than to despise the Mexicans:

Some children were so affected by this study that they planned how they would behave toward the Mexicans in the future. No matter what others did they decided that they would not stare at the Mexicans on the street or go peeking in their windows nor say unkind things about them either to their faces or to others. They did not condone throwing peanuts at the bald heads of Mexicans who happened to be in the theater or laughing at their looks. As one boy so aptly put it, "They can't help what they look like. They are human beings like

us. I wouldn't like it if somebody laughed at me."²

* * *

It is this process of *sensitizing* the prejudiced individual to the needs of others, the creation of empathy with members of different groups, which should constitute one of the major goals of a dynamic re-education.

* * *

Again the schools are in the best position to make the prejudiced individual aware of the problems of others. A first step here consists in providing the child with at least a modicum of insight into his own problems and the causes and reasons for his own actions. This is to be followed by a demonstration of the similarity of his own actions and reactions, problems and worries, with those of other children.

To increase the social sensitivity of children and adults alike is no easy task. We have seen how the inner needs of the individual make it difficult for him to identify with the underprivileged and outsiders in our own society, not to speak of people in distant regions or lands.

* * *

A first step in this process should consist in bringing feelings out into the open, in making people understand their own as well as the emotional reactions of others. Children as well as adults need to realize that all people feel anger, jealousy, fear in situations which frustrate them. They must be made to realize that only situations which are rewarding to the individual bring forth feelings of friendliness, trust, generosity. Our own actions as well as those of others are reactions to the way we have been treated. The understanding of our own problems is a condition for the understanding of others. Once we realize what kind of things make us angry or aggressive we are in a better position to understand what makes others angry or hostile.

² J. V. Merrill and J. B. Lesnizk, "From Prejudice to Straight Thinking in the Fourth Grade," in *Learning World Goodwill*, The National Elementary Principal, 25th Yearbook, 1946, p. 163.

It is necessary to show students how it feels not to be accepted. Even among majority members we can find many individuals who have experienced rejection and are in a position to tell about it. One may, for example, ask the transfer students how they felt when they first came to the new school. Typical reactions recorded in this type of approach include: "You don't know what to expect," "You are afraid others will laugh at you," "It makes you feel not wanted, and you don't want to mix in where you are not wanted."

To create empathy with immigrants one may link the problems of the immigrants more directly with the child's own background and experience by asking them to investigate the background of their own parents.

* * *

A more dramatic method used to sensitize students to the needs of others and at the same time to learn to understand each other better is the role-playing method or psychodrama. The participating individuals are asked to take over the role of another person, with whom they are required to identify. The prejudiced majority member, requested to take over the position of the excluded minority student, may be in a better position to appreciate the latter's feeling and to understand his reactions than he would be if he had only listened to a discussion of the latter's problems. . . .

A final step in the process of re-education may well consist of teaching the prejudiced individual to gain insight into the effects of prejudiced attitudes on his perception and thinking. Realization of the operation of selection and distortion in perception, stereotyping, and projection can be introduced best by demonstrating these mechanisms in areas where the individual is not emotionally involved. If we are able to create a friendly atmosphere and to make the demonstrations amusing, we will avoid hostility and create an atmosphere conducive to learning. Guilt feelings can be avoided by showing that all people engage in these defensive mechanisms and perceive incorrectly.

Selective perception can easily be demon-

strated by asking persons with different motivations to record what they noticed in the same setting. A young man and a young woman, a fashion expert and a college dean may note entirely different things while visiting a college class. Both men and women are likely to spend more attention to the opposite sex and note their faces and figures. The fashion expert may only observe their clothes and the dean the relative amount of attention they give to the lecture.

It would not be difficult to show how anti-Semites and relatively unprejudiced people arrive at different interpretations of the same pictures showing the interaction between Jews and Gentiles. We recall a similar experiment showing a clash between striking steel mill workers and the police. Those observers which favored management's position later recorded having seen a picture in which the police were attacked by the workers. The pro-labor observers noticed the police attacking the strikers. Prior attitudes determined perception.

Even more dramatic is the demonstration of the operations of rumors. Four students may be sent out of the class, and the rest told a story which contradicts popular notions, for example of a woman who acts cool and courageous and a man who behaves in a cowardly and indecisive manner, during an automobile accident. The first student is then recalled and the story is read to him. He in turn tells the story to the second student called in next. In this fashion the story is transmitted from mouth to mouth in front of the class which has occasion to follow the consecutive distortions, omissions, and additions which the story undergoes. In the above example, for instance, the woman may become less daring, the man more and more in command of the situation. In a subsequent discussion the teacher can now explain the contribution of rumors to panics or race riots. A small fire may become a major conflagration, an altercation between a Negro and a white man may become enlarged to a major gang fight by the time the tenth person has heard and transmitted the story. . . .

From here one may proceed to the demon-

stration of stereotyped perceptions and thinking.

• • •

We will finally be able to demonstrate the influence of projection upon our perception of others. Even a relatively young person can be made to understand how the angry boy is more likely to view others as aggressive than the quiet boy, how we see others in terms of our own needs and expectations.

• • •

After this point has been made, it is only one further step to discuss how the same behavior which we call "*aggressive*, forward-looking, getting ahead and advancing oneself" for members of our own group becomes "*aggressive*, mercenary, pushing, only interested in themselves" for members of other groups whom we view as competitors. What looks like loyalty and self-protection to the family experiencing discrimination, appears as clannishness or unwillingness to mix to the prejudiced outsiders.

• • •

Education against prejudice must be considered an integral part of general education for citizenship in a democracy. Prejudice is irreconcilable with American ideals of the rights of the individual and of equal opportunity for all. Not only must we try to erase prejudice through education, but we should attempt to make our children resistant to prejudiced influences and propaganda in the same manner as we teach them to beware of foreign ideologies like communism and fascism.

Formal education must not be content with the mere teaching of facts about minorities. The children must be made aware of the evil consequences of prejudice for themselves and others, made aware of its widespread existence even in their own environment. They must be taught to detect prejudice. Applying modern methods in a variety of school subjects, the students must be taught to discover things for themselves, and to reject hearsay, rumors, and false perceptions. Successful immuniza-

tion may well have its effects long after they leave school.

Effective teaching must proceed in a democratic setting. There must be no discrimination or segregation to counteract it. All groups must be fairly represented, particularly so among the ranks of teachers and administrators. The classroom should be made a laboratory in democratic living, in which students learn how to take the initiative, to work together on cooperative projects.

Not only from the point of view of better intergroup relations, but in order to promote better human relations generally and to obtain a healthier citizenry, the school authorities should attempt to answer the emotional needs of their charges. Where possible, an or-

ganized program of mental health should be established. Even in its absence teachers can be trained to become aware of the emotional needs of their students and respond to them by providing opportunities which make them feel wanted and give them a sense of belonging. Through making the class members aware of their own needs and problems, they can be sensitized to the needs of others and learn to identify with them.

Finally, the school should attempt to reach the parents in order to avoid conflict between the teachings of the school and the parents. Through parents who are interested in the education of their children it is perhaps possible to involve and educate an adult group otherwise beyond the age of formal education.

SUMMARY

The basic question in this chapter has been the extent to which the American ideal of equality of educational opportunity has been limited in practice by class and ethnic-group discrimination in society and in the public schools. The American people have never undertaken to provide complete equality of educational opportunity, since absolute equality in this respect would probably entail either complete equalization of income or else the institutionalization, almost from birth, of all children. Further, equality of educational opportunity has not meant an identical educational program for every child regardless of his interests, needs, and abilities. Nevertheless, reasonable equality of educational opportunity is a valid American ideal which may properly be used as a standard in appraising educational practices and theories. Obviously, the word "reasonable" is a term capable of many interpretations. But the trend—a trend which the editors of this book believe is in full accordance with the American democratic tradition—has been in the direction of as liberal an interpretation of this ideal as possible without vitiating other, equally authentic American ideals.

Unquestionably, the class and ethnic-group structure described in Chapters 5 and 6 has operated to limit the educational opportunity of children and youth from the lower socioeconomic groups. There is, however, considerable difference of opinion with respect to both the extent of this limitation and the degree to which it can and should be removed. In evolving your own opinion on this question, it might be helpful to keep in mind the following points.

1. Although the increase in high-school enrollment has been phenomenal, a large proportion of the youth of secondary-school-age do drop out of school prior to graduation. Most of these dropouts are from the lower socioeconomic groups. Further, more than half

of the young people of high intellectual ability, as measured by intelligence tests, do not get a college education. Again, by far the greatest proportion of the young people of college caliber who do not go to college come from the lower socioeconomic groups. The reasons that have been advanced to account for these facts are (1) that the economic and social handicaps faced by the lower socioeconomic groups force many lower-class boys and girls to withdraw from school; (2) that the lower-class culture does not build into the children of this class the expectation of and desire for an education; and (3) that the middle-class orientation of the school has led to an educational program which is not adapted to the interest and needs of lower-class pupils.

2. School boards are composed largely of members of the upper and middle socioeconomic groups, and the teaching staff is predominantly middle-class. It has been said that middle-class teachers do not understand the motivation and needs of lower-class children and, further, that the school is governed by a middle-class orientation which has placed severe social and educational handicaps on children and youth from the lower socioeconomic groups. This middle-class bias, according to Warner and his associates, permeates every aspect of the school, including the curriculum, school discipline, the distribution of academic rewards and punishments, and participation in extraschool activities. The study of "Midwest," by Barker and his co-workers, indicates that the middle-class bias, if it exists at all, is not universal. At the present time we simply do not have the objective evidence, on a national scale, required to appraise conclusively the position taken by Warner, Davis, Hollingshead, and others on the question of the middle-class orientation of the school. Probably some such bias does exist, but it is impossible to say authoritatively how widespread or how strong it is throughout the nation.

3. The demand by Hand, Davis, and others for curriculum reform poses an important educational issue. Should the public school, through the twelfth or fourteenth grade, adapt its educational program to the interest, needs, and abilities of its students? Or is there a specific content to education which must be taught regardless of the abilities or interests of students? If there is such a content, does the present curriculum adequately embody it? In answering this last question, we must take into account both the charge that the school has already departed too far from the traditional program of education and Davis' contention that the predominantly literary curriculum now prevalent in the school is too narrow to develop the intellectual capacities of middle-class as well as lower-class boys and girls.

Put another way, does equality of educational opportunity mean that the school should give every pupil a real chance to develop fully whatever talents and abilities he may have? Or does it mean simply that everyone should have an equal chance to acquire an academic and literary education, provided that he has the ability and interest required to succeed in this program?

4. In the past, the existence of segregated schools has usually meant that the educational facilities provided for Negro children have been decidedly inferior to those provided for white children. Since 1940, however, serious efforts have been made to improve the quality of Negro schools. Nevertheless, it has been asserted that segregated

schools are *per se* unequal, since segregation carries with it the stigma of inferiority. In its recent decision on the segregation cases, the Supreme Court of the United States held that equality of educational opportunity was impossible under the conditions imposed by segregation.

Throughout Part II we have been concerned with an analysis of certain aspects of the social structure of our society and with the influence of these factors on persons and on the school. In the course of the discussion, we have frequently had occasion to refer to American ideals and beliefs. We have seen that although Americans do have certain ideals and beliefs in common, these ideals and beliefs are often interpreted in different ways. In Part III we shall turn directly to a study of American ideals and value conflicts as they are related to the function and purposes of the public school.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. Explain the fact that "drop out" is associated with the occupation of parents. With class status.
2. An investigation showed that lower-class families tended to eat meals in relays, middle-class families to have "family meals," and upper-class families to have decorated tables, special dishes and cutlery, and to be waited on by a maid. What implications has this for the teacher of home economics who is giving instruction in table-setting?
3. Is a teacher of home economics who works in a slum area being realistic when she teaches that meals should be planned a week ahead and that attention should be given to the provision of a balanced diet? What should she do?
4. A high school boy who wanted to prepare himself to become a state policeman asked his home room teacher to help him find information about the requirements of such work and the nature and duration of the training. On hearing of his son's plans the boy's father, a local dentist, came to the high school to inform the teacher that his son's occupation had already been chosen—he was to become a lawyer. Moreover, he (the father) had already discussed the matter with the boy, and they had selected the school he was to attend. As he was leaving the teacher's room, the father indicated clearly that there were to be no policemen in his family. Discuss the social meaning of this situation for the teacher in a guidance program.
5. A faculty member expresses the view that too much emphasis is placed upon the practical studies (vocational studies), and that such studies as mathematics, science, and languages are being neglected. Then he goes on to say that we need to place more emphasis upon these "cultural" subjects if boys and girls are to develop so that they can enjoy the better things of life. Explore the sociological interpretation of this teacher's view.
6. Most English teachers teach that "between you and me" is correct and that "between you and I" is incorrect. What is the sociological reason for this distinction? What does your answer to this question suggest as the basis for the "correctness" of certain English expressions? What are the implications for objectives in English?

7. Recall your experiences as a high school student. Do you remember any incidents in which there was an apparent class bias on the part of a teacher or of the faculty? If you do recall such an incident, describe it and tell what the bias was.

8. What assumptions about human nature must be made by persons who favor segregated schools? About equality? About the American Dream?

1. Most of the material pertinent to this chapter will be found in magazine articles. The student is urged, therefore, to consult *The Reader's Guide* and *The Education Index* for references bearing on the various topics discussed. *The Harvard Educational Review* devoted two issues (Summer 1953 and Fall 1953) to a discussion of social-class structure and American education. Some of the articles in these two issues are critical of the Warner school. The fall issue contains an excellent bibliography, *Progressive Education* also devoted its February 1950 issue to the same subject.

2. A. B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, Allison Davis, *Social-Class Influences on Learning*, W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated*, and Celia Stendler, *Children of Brasstown*, are, perhaps, the most available treatments in book form of the relationship between status classes and education. The student should also consult the chapters on education in Robert and Helen Lynd, *Middletown*, and *Middletown in Transition*. *The Uneducated* by Eli Ginzberg and Douglas W. Bray describes the relationship between education, personal welfare, and social efficiency in both a civilian and a military context.



PART THREE

*American Ideals and Conflicts
and the Social Function
of the School*

Chapter 8. The Democratic Tradition

John Dewey • T. V. Smith • Eduard C. Lindeman • R. H. Tawney
• Alan F. Griffin • Ralph Barton Perry • Robert M. MacIver • T. V.
Smith • Eduard C. Lindeman • R. H. Tawney • The President's
Committee on Civil Rights

Chapter 9. Church, State, and School

William H. Kilpatrick • R. Lawrence Siegel • F. J. Sheed • Arnold
S. Nash • William O. Stanley • American Council on Education • B.
Othanel Smith • Rabbi Morris Adler • Reverend Cletus Healy, S.J. •
John K. Norton

Chapter 10. Roots of Confusion and Conflict in American Beliefs

George S. Counts • Adolf A. Berle, Jr. • Gardiner C. Means • Wood-
row Wilson • Friedrich A. Hayek • Carl L. Becker • National As-
sociation of Manufacturers • Most Reverend Francis J. Haas • Quincy
Wright • William E. Borah • Carl L. Becker • Cord E. Meyer, Jr.

Chapter 11. The Problem of Education in a Transitional Era

The President's Research Committee on Social Trends • Gunnar Myrdal
• Robert Lynd • Robert C. Angell • William O. Stanley • R. Bruce
Raup • B. Othanel Smith • William O. Stanley • J. Harlan Shores

Chapter 12. Contrasting Conceptions of the Social Role of the School

John Dewey • Harold C. Hand • W. Lloyd Warner • Robert J.
Havighurst • Martin B. Loeb • John MacDonald • Robert M. Hutch-
ins • Jacques Maritain • B. Othanel Smith • William O. Stanley
• J. Harlan Shores

to educate in one way rather than in another from the society which, as teacher, he represents. But few civilized societies want to have their culture reproduced exactly as it stands. It is, rather, an idealized version of the culture that the school is expected to nurture in its pupils. In the last analysis, the authority of the teacher rests on the basic intellectual and moral commitments of the society served by the school. On this ground, the educational profession may be justified in opposing and resisting demands which violate these commitments, even though, for the moment, the demands appear to be supported by a majority of the people of the community. When the educational profession in the United States asserts that American public education is, and should be, grounded in the spirit and tenets of democracy, what it is saying is that in its judgment the democratic tradition embodies the deepest intellectual and moral commitments of the American people.

THE VALIDITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC TRADITION

In asserting that "the democratic tradition embodies the deepest moral and intellectual commitments of the American people" we do not mean to imply that all Americans are devoted to this tradition or that our society is democratic in every aspect of its structure and behavior. Neither of these statements is true. A tiny minority on the left and a somewhat larger group on the right patently espouse antidemocratic social philosophies. And most of us think and act, at times, in ways that are not compatible with the spirit or the tenets of democracy. Indeed, Gunnar Myrdal points out that although most Americans deeply and genuinely believe in the democratic creed, they nevertheless frequently harbor subsidiary views in conflict with it (see Selection 79). Unfortunately, these subsidiary beliefs are sometimes reflected in the structure and behavior of American society.

But, despite these facts, there is impressive evidence that the democratic tradition does embody the social faith of the nation as a whole. Its fundamental principles were clearly stated in the Declaration of Independence, and in recent years its ideals have been repeatedly reaffirmed by our national leaders. Philosophers, scholars, and historians—native or foreign—almost without exception describe the American ethos in terms of the ideals and doctrines of democracy. And the testimony of these writers has been confirmed by careful studies of American society.¹

Moreover, to a very substantial extent, the nation has translated its democratic ideals into concrete reality. For more than a century, whenever the issue has become clear, the American people have moved steadily (if, at times, slowly) in the direction of a greater degree of democracy in fact as well as in theory. The educational profession is not mistaken in its conviction that the democratic tradition does embody the basic social philosophy of the American people.

¹ See especially Robert C. Angell, *Integration of American Society*, McGraw-Hill, 1941, pp. 206-210, and Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, Harper, 1944, Vol. I, pp. 3-25.

CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS OF DEMOCRACY

Nevertheless, succeeding chapters will present substantial evidence that widespread confusion and conflict in social points of view has developed in the United States. As the next three chapters will show, there are many forces behind this conflict of perspectives, including the communist and semifascist minorities to which reference has already been made. But the heart of the difficulty lies in divergent interpretations of democracy. For some persons, democracy is simply a form of government; for others, it is a social and moral philosophy definitive of a way of life. As a purely political concept, democracy is representative government based upon universal suffrage and majority rule limited by well-defined minority rights. As a moral and social philosophy, permeating every aspect of society, democracy is a profound belief in the dignity of man and in the worth of human personality. It is individualistic and equalitarian in the sense that it insists upon the supreme moral importance of every individual. Obviously, democracy regarded as a social and moral philosophy includes political democracy. But, unlike the purely political conception, this interpretation of democracy implies that all aspects of the social system should be so organized and arranged that they permit and facilitate, in so far as possible, full development of the capacities and abilities of every person. It is from this theory of democracy that the American dream and the ideal of equality of opportunity discussed in Chapter 7 were derived.

There is, however, another and perhaps even more important conflict in the interpretation of democracy—one that has been at the heart of most of the recent political struggles within democracy. This conflict is between those who would use government to promote the economic and social welfare of the masses and those who insist that the public welfare is best promoted by restricting the scope of government largely to the maintenance of law and order in a free, competitive society. But behind these two views of the role and function of government lie different conceptions of the nature of man and of society.

The first of these two interpretations of democracy is derived from the classical liberal theory of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The basic premises of this theory may be summarized in two significant propositions. First, the natural individual, apart from and prior to his membership in the social group, is fully possessed of personality and is endowed by natural law with certain absolute rights which are not subject to social regulation. And, second, society with its political and social institutions is a secondary and contractual mode of existence into which man has entered only because it is, for certain limited purposes, convenient for him to do so. The crux of these propositions is the thesis that the individual is inherently a solitary rather than a social being and that all human relations are wholly external to the self. Society, moreover, is regarded as a mere collection of individuals having no common social interests but only individual, private interests. Men may, in specific situations, find that they have mutual interests; but these mutual interests must be interpreted not as conjoint, collective interests that bind men together in a common brotherhood but as a mere conjunction, more or less

temporary, of separate private interests. Further, there is no natural obligation to enter into cooperative activity with other men. Natural law does impose upon every individual the obligation to respect the rights of others, but it does not obligate him in any way to aid them in obtaining their ends, unless, for reasons of his own, he chooses to do so. From these premises it follows that group activity must be based either upon purely voluntary agreements among men to cooperate with one another in order to obtain, each for himself, some purely private good or upon an unethical application of force by which certain individuals are compelled to work for the benefit of others. Since external compulsion is clearly the negation of freedom, classical liberalism necessarily implies that the only basis for collective action compatible with human freedom is purely voluntary cooperation.

This theory, however, has rarely been held in "pure" form; and certainly it has little to offer in this form to an industrial and commercial civilization which depends upon the maintenance of law and order, the protection of property rights, and the enforcement of contracts. The theory has accordingly been modified by admitting a strictly limited area in which, by means of a social contract, men have surrendered their natural rights and within which coercion may legitimately be used. Isolated men, in a state of nature, it was argued, have no means of protecting either their liberty or their property against superior force. Accordingly, in order to maintain the substance of their rights, men have entered into society and established governments. But both the function and the powers of government are limited by the original contract. Strictly speaking, its function is not to promote human welfare but to protect natural rights, including property rights, against fraud or force and to make voluntary agreements possible by enforcing the obligation of a voluntary contract. Whenever government goes beyond this function or assumes powers not essential to its execution it violates both the terms of the social contract, which is the sole basis of its authority, and the natural liberty of its citizens. In practice, of course, this theory has been modified by demands of necessity and convenience. But these modifications have been made reluctantly and have remained largely outside the orbit of theoretical justification. Consequently, at least in the theoretical sense, they have had but little influence on this interpretation of the democratic tradition.

The second interpretation of democracy, which, for want of a better term, John Dewey called the "new liberalism," embodies social ideas and attitudes as old as those implied by the first interpretation. The liberal-democratic tradition has always contained a basic contradiction between the theory that the primary function of government is that of an impartial arbiter in a competitive struggle for wealth and status and the conviction, repeatedly stated by Thomas Jefferson, that the first business of government is to promote the welfare of the common people. This contradiction, of course, has always led to political controversy. But it was not until after the industrial revolution and the development of large-scale industrial enterprise that its full consequences were clearly perceived. Before the industrial revolution, in fact, many able political theorists—Thomas Jefferson among them—espoused both these points of view.

As a distinct social philosophy, therefore, the second interpretation was formulated in the latter part of the nineteenth century, largely as a criticism of the classical liberal

interpretation. The adherents of the new liberalism asserted that, in the first place, the premises of the classical liberal theory were not in accord with modern social science. There is no warrant whatever, they said, for regarding man as naturally an isolated being having only external relations with his fellows. Rather, man is inherently a social being, nourished and shaped by the culture into which he is born. Far from being endowed by nature, apart from society, with intelligence, personality, and inalienable rights, he is, without the benefit of a culture built by countless generations of men living in society, little more than a mere brute, devoid of language, reason, conscious selfhood, and any sense of moral right. It is precisely because he is, as a member of a social group, the heir to the cultural inheritance that he is able to become a human personality or that rights and obligations have any meaning for him. He is, moreover, sustained and supported, from birth to death, by the institutions, customs, skills, attitudes, and ideals of his social group. Stripped of these products of society he is not a free man but a poor and helpless wretch. Certain individuals may indeed find that particular social controls are inimical to their interests, but to postulate a wholesale opposition between human freedom and social control is absurd. It may be asserted categorically that without society there is no freedom (*i.e.*, effective and intelligent choice), only complete subjection to physical and biological law.

Moreover, these writers argued, man's relations to his fellows are not external and mechanical but are part of his very selfhood. If he is to live as a human being, he must share in the common life of some social group. Hence, as an isolated and independent being he is endowed with no natural rights whatever. Right is a moral and legal term; and both morality and legality are products of social relationships. No man has a moral claim to a right that he can exercise regardless of the consequences to his fellow men or to the quality of the group life in which he shares. What he possesses, rather, is a moral right to share in those privileges and opportunities which will fully develop his ability to participate in and contribute to the common life of the group. This right is indeed inalienable, because no society has the moral authority to deny it to any human being. But it is a right to participate, to share, to develop the full potentialities of human life in a particular culture, not an unchecked and uncontrollable right to behave in ways that seriously restrict the life of others.

The advocates of the new liberalism assert, in the second place, that under modern social conditions the practical consequences of classical liberalism are as bad as its premises are false. By its refusal to recognize any coercive power other than the acts of government or private violence, it has permitted wide areas of arbitrary and undemocratic forms of economic and social coercion to stunt the growth and limit the orbit of effective choice for many millions of economically dependent persons. On first examination it might appear that classical liberalism has defined liberty as the right of every individual to determine his own affairs so long as he does not interfere with the similar right of others. Actually, however, this is so only in a formal and abstract sense. Whenever freedom is conceived as effective choice, it is clear that its realization depends upon something more than the absence of legal restraint. Freedom so conceived is not general, abstract, and

negative but positive and specific; and, as such, it is closely related to the actual distribution of effective power—social, political, and economic—in a specific social situation. Certainly the legal right to buy a fur coat is not identical with effective freedom to do so, as many a young girl can testify. Hence the actual definition of freedom embodied in classical liberalism is the negative, limited conception of freedom as the absence of governmental restraint.²

The authors of classical liberalism patently regarded government itself as the chief enemy of human freedom. Accordingly, they constructed elaborate safeguards to protect both the individual and his property against legal interference or private violence. But, say the advocates of the new liberalism, they took little account of other forms of coercion or of other limitations which social and economic arrangements, ultimately enjoying the protection of law, might impose upon human freedom. Liberty, therefore, defined simply as the absence of governmental control, is one thing for those who possess the means to realize the freedom formally guaranteed by the law and another for those who, because of lack of means, are not able to exercise their formal rights. Thus, in effect, the theory of liberty embraced by classical liberalism means extensive freedom for some but only a severely limited freedom for others. For the degree of effective choice that one enjoys is made to depend, in large measure, upon economic success. Naturally, those in possession of ample economic means are apt to regard the extension of social control as a restriction of the liberty they now enjoy, as indeed it very often is. But naturally also, those who do not possess such means are apt to regard the extension of social control, if it operates to increase their economic or political power, not as a restriction but as an expansion of freedom.

Moreover, according to the adherents of the new liberalism, the theory of classical liberalism has engendered a false opposition between the ideal of liberty and the ideal of equality, for unregulated economic activity based on the possession of private property and the pursuit of private profit is certain to produce increasing economic, social, and, ultimately, political inequality. This, they assert, is serious not only because, as the founding fathers clearly recognized, political freedom in the long run depends upon a considerable degree of economic equality but also because, on the basis of classical liberalism, equality is interpreted, when it is admitted at all, simply as equality of opportunity to engage in a race for economic reward. The poor are, therefore, cut off not only from a full share in the economic wealth of society but also from access to many of the cultural goods of modern civilization, and from the opportunity to develop their non-economic capacities and potentialities. Hence opportunity to develop the spiritual, intellectual, and esthetic capacities of the human personality is, in large measure, dependent upon success in the economic race. As a result, society itself—not merely the economically unfortunate—

² See, for example, Herbert Spencer's definition of freedom—"the liberty which the citizen enjoys is to be measured not by the nature of the governmental machinery under which he lives but by the relative paucity of the restraints it imposes upon him" (*Man Versus the State*, pp. 15-16). William Bennett has expressed the same notion even more simply—"Liberty and law are mutually exclusive" (*Freedom and Liberty*, p. 354).

is impoverished. Moreover, men are judged not by what they are or might become but simply by their economic capacities. The negative and formal conception of liberty, therefore, is inimical both to equality and to individuality, although it is proclaimed in the sacred name of respect for the individual. Further, even the limited and truncated conception of equality that classical liberalism admits turns out, in the last analysis, to mean not actual equality of opportunity but merely the absence of legal caste barriers in the race for wealth and position.

CLARIFICATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC TRADITION

Even a cursory examination of the two interpretations of democracy outlined above shows that the cleavage in the democratic tradition involves not only diverse conceptions of the nature of man and society and of the role of government but also different definitions of liberty, equality, rights, and individualism. But if it would be a mistake to ignore these differences, it would likewise be a serious error to overlook the common roots of these social theories. In the words of William O. Stanley,

It is true, and it is important, that beneath this division in democratic theory there is a considerable area of common agreement—an area which comes to its sharpest focus when democracy is compared with totally different social theories like fascism and communism. Both wings of democracy, for example, in contradiction to communism and to other nondemocratic social theories, insist that flesh and blood individuals rather than class, race, or some social institution, such as the church or the state, are the final focus of moral value. And both share, again in contradiction to communism and other nondemocratic ideologies, a common emphasis upon the civil liberties and upon the primacy of reason.

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. . . It has been argued that the differences within the democratic position are relatively unimportant, since they merely reflect controversies over means, whereas the agreements concern the fundamental ends and purposes of American life. Unfortunately there seems to be even less justification for this position than there is for the belief that the areas of agreement are spurious and illusory. In the first place, since the means employed necessarily condition the ends actually attained, controversies over means (save where some method exists for determining in advance, with a high degree of precision, the consequences of the various means proposed) are apt to prove almost as divisive as controversies over ends. Hence, the values and principles shared in common by all democrats have frequently meant but little in terms of the objectives of common action. And, in the second place, the contradictions in democratic theory involve far more than conflicts over means. They involve direct controversies with respect to ends, as, for example, in the case of conflicting conceptions of the role of equality in a demo-

cratic society. And, to an even greater extent, they involve different orders of significance and different coefficients of intensity among ends ostensibly held in common. Thus what appears on the surface as a disagreement over means is frequently, in reality, a disagreement about the relative importance of ends. For, in the last analysis, the measure of the value a person or a group places on an objective is to be sought, not in what is said about it, but in the care devoted to obtaining and using the means without which it cannot be realized.

* * *

It is, therefore, difficult to avoid the conclusion that, if the democratic tradition embodies significant areas of agreement which may prove of the greatest importance in the reintegration of American society, it also harbors significant conflicts which, until they are resolved, divide rather than unite the American people. And, unfortunately, this conclusion is further strengthened by the patent fact that these controversies are not simply intellectual controversies but are intimately connected with the conflicting interests of different groups of men differently related to major social institutions in our society.³

It may be argued that in practice, if not in principle, the conflict in the democratic tradition has already been resolved along the lines indicated by the second of the two interpretations presented above. Certainly American business has been subjected ever since 1890 to a considerable measure of social control. And since 1932 the American people have adopted a whole series of measures designed to ensure a decent standard of living for all citizens. Further, the federal government has acknowledged its responsibility to prevent another major depression—a policy affirmed by the Eisenhower administration no less than those of Roosevelt and Truman. Aside from a small and intransigent rear guard, no one today seriously expects that the trend established by these measures and policies will be reversed. The only serious issue, it is said, is how far, how fast, and by what means the trend will continue. But, whatever may be said on this point, the fact remains that on the level of theory at least the controversy has not been resolved. And so long as this is true the division in the intellectual and moral postulates of the American people also remains.

If the above conclusion is correct, it has considerable significance for the educational profession. As we have seen in the opening paragraphs of this introduction, the educational profession has taken the position that public education in the United States is, and should be, grounded in the democratic tradition. But which interpretation of this tradition is to be regarded as authoritative? Obviously, so long as the American people are divided on this issue the public school cannot inculcate either point of view. It can emphasize the common elements at the heart of the democratic tradition. And it can undertake to clarify for its students the issues involved in the different interpretations of this tradition. But clarification for the student requires a thorough understanding on the

³ William O. Stanley, *Education and Social Integration*, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953, pp. 163-165. Footnotes omitted.

part of the teacher. Moreover, it is a serious mistake to assume that only the social-science teacher needs this understanding of the meaning of democracy. The commitment of the teaching profession is to base all the education of children and youth upon the principles of democracy. It is frequently asserted, for example, that the school can develop democratic personalities in its pupils only if students are permitted considerable freedom in the school and in the classroom. But what is freedom in the school situation? Is it the absence of social control, or the participation of the pupils in the determination of the controls to be applied? We cannot answer this question in the present chapter. But it should be clear that, if the school has the responsibility to develop democratic personalities, the question must be answered with reference to the way in which freedom is defined in society outside the school.

The readings in this chapter are intended to help you gain a clearer understanding of the meaning of the democratic tradition and of the issues involved in the different interpretations of this tradition. For the most part the passages quoted reflect a point of view associated with the second of the two interpretations that have been presented. But, with the possible exception of Selections 50 and 51, they state the issues clearly and fairly, whatever their arguments for their own point of view. In studying the chapter it would be well to keep the following questions in mind.

1. How valid is the contention that the basic intellectual and moral postulates of American society as a whole are to be found in the democratic tradition?

2. What differences do you find in the two interpretations of democracy with respect to: (*a*) the nature of man, (*b*) the nature of society, (*c*) the role and function of government, (*d*) the meaning of liberty, (*e*) the meaning of equality, (*f*) the relation of liberty and equality, (*g*) the basis and meaning of rights, (*h*) the nature and control of property, and (*i*) the valid elements of individualism?

3. What common elements do you find in these two interpretations?

4. How serious, in your opinion, is the cleavage in the liberal-democratic tradition?

5. What modifications, if any, would you make in either or both interpretations of democracy presented in this chapter? Does your answer take into full account the actual conditions of modern life?

6. To what extent and in what ways has the expansion of the functions and activities of government in the last twenty-five years expanded the orbit of human freedom? To what extent and in what ways has freedom been restricted? Is government the chief enemy of freedom?

7. How far would you go in repealing the regulatory measures enacted since 1890? How far would you be willing to see the federal government go in the direction of the "welfare state"?

Selections 50 and 51, by John Dewey, present the view that democracy is a way of life, not just a political theory. Selection 52, by T. V. Smith and Eduard C. Lindeman,

explores the meaning of equality and fraternity in the democratic tradition. Further, Smith and Lindeman argue that a substantial degree of equality is necessary to development of a feeling of brotherhood. The noted English scholar R. H. Tawney, in Selection 53, discusses the difference between the purely legal and the substantive conception of equality. The next three readings examine the basic issues relating to the meaning of liberty or freedom. Griffin (Selection 54), is primarily concerned with the meaning of freedom, Perry (Selection 55), with the relation of freedom and government, and MacIver (Selection 56), with the relation between freedom and law. Selection 57 contains two passages, one from Smith and Lindeman and the other from R. H. Tawney, both of which review, in somewhat different ways, the dispute over the relationship between liberty and equality. Selection 58 is a statement, taken from the report of the President's Committee on Civil Liberties, of the place of the civil liberties—freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly—in the democratic tradition.

50 • *Democracy as a Way of Life*

Democracy is a word, and, like all words, it is variously defined. It is used to designate a form of government in which the people participate, directly, as in a town meeting, or indirectly, as in a representative assembly. It is used to stand for a set of ideals, such as freedom, equality, and justice. It is used to refer to a method of resolving differences of opinion. It can mean the faith men live by in a society dedicated to the growth and development of the individual.

Democracy is all these things and more, in the view of America's great philosopher John Dewey. In his eyes, democracy, whatever else it may be, is first of all a way of living. Perhaps no one has given a more fundamental formulation of democracy than this classical philosopher of American society. The following selection is one of his most succinct and lucid statements of the meaning of democracy in its various senses.

The keynote of democracy, Dewey says, is the right of every individual to participate in the determination of the values that govern human association. Thus democracy implies faith in the intelligence of the common man and in the value of cooperative experience. Dewey calls our attention to the importance of democracy in the home, in the school, and in other social institutions, for unless democracy as a form of political government is rooted in the common ways of thinking, feeling, and acting in community life and other face-to-face relationships, it cannot survive. Once teachers realize that democracy is a way of living, they must determine how best to organize and operate the school so as to foster this mode of human association.

[From John Dewey, "Democracy and Educational Administration," *School and Society*, 45 (April 3, 1937): 457-462. Reprinted by permission of William W. Brickman, Editor, and Stanley Lehrer, Managing Editor.]

Democracy is much broader than a special political form, a method of conducting government, of making laws and carrying on governmental administration by means of popular suffrage and elected officers. It is that, of course. But it is something broader and deeper than that. The political and governmental phase of democracy is a means, the best means so far found, for realizing ends that lie in the wide domain of human relationships and the development of human personality. It is, as we often say, though perhaps without appreciating all that is involved in the saying, a way of life, social and individual. The key note of democracy as a way of life may be expressed, it seems to me, as the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together which is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals.

Universal suffrage, recurring elections, responsibility of those who are in political power to the voters, and the other factors of democratic government are means that have been found expedient for realizing democracy as the truly human way of living. They are not a final end and a final value. They are to be judged on the basis of their contribution to the end. It is a form of idolatry to erect means into the end which they serve. Democratic political forms are simply the best means that human wit has devised up to a special time in history. But they rest back upon the idea that no man or limited set of men is wise enough or good enough to rule others without their consent; the positive meaning of this statement is that all those who are affected by social institutions must have a share in producing and managing them. The two facts that each one is influenced in what he does and enjoys and in what he becomes by the institutions under which he lives, and that therefore he shall have, in a democracy, a voice in shaping them, are the passive and active sides of the same fact.

The development of political democracy came about through substitution of the meth-

od of mutual consultation and voluntary agreement for the method of subordination of the many to the few enforced from above. Social arrangements which involve fixed subordination are maintained by coercion. The coercion need not be physical. There have existed, for short periods, benevolent despotisms. But coercion of some sort there has been; perhaps economic, certainly psychological and moral. The very fact of exclusion from participation is a subtle form of suppression. It gives individuals no opportunity to reflect and decide upon what is good for them. Others who are supposed to be wiser and who in any case have more power decide the question for them and also decide the methods and means by which subjects may arrive at the enjoyment of what is good for them. This form of coercion and suppression is more subtle and more effective than is overt intimidation and restraint. When it is habitual and embodied in social institutions, it seems the normal and natural state of affairs. The mass usually become unaware that they have a claim to a development of their own powers. Their experience is so restricted that they are not conscious of restriction. It is part of the democratic conception that they as individuals are not the only sufferers, but that the whole social body is deprived of the potential resources that should be at its service. The individuals of the submerged mass may not be very wise. But there is one thing they are wiser about than anybody else can be, and that is where the shoe pinches, the troubles they suffer from.

The foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature; faith in human intelligence and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. It is not belief that these things are complete but that if given a show they will grow and be able to generate progressively the knowledge and wisdom needed to guide collective action. Every autocratic and authoritarian scheme of social action rests on a belief that the needed intelligence is confined to a superior few, who because of inherent natural gifts are endowed with the ability and the right to control the

conduct of others; laying down principles and rules and directing the ways in which they are carried out. It would be foolish to deny that much can be said for this point of view. It is that which controlled human relations in social groups for much the greater part of human history. The democratic faith has emerged very, very recently in the history of mankind. Even where democracies now exist, men's minds and feelings are still permeated with ideas about leadership imposed from above, ideas that developed in the long early history of mankind. After democratic political institutions were nominally established, beliefs and ways of looking at life and of acting that originated when men and women were externally controlled and subjected to arbitrary power, persisted in the family, the church, business and the school, and experience shows that as long as they persist there, political democracy is not secure.

Belief in equality is an element of the democratic credo. It is not, however, belief in equality of natural endowments. Those who proclaimed the idea of equality did not suppose they were enunciating a psychological doctrine, but a legal and political one. All individuals are entitled to equality of treatment by law and in its administration. Each one is affected equally in quality if not in quantity by the institutions under which he lives and has an equal right to express his judgment, although the weight of his judgment may not be equal in amount when it enters into the pooled result to that of others. In short, each one is equally an individual and entitled to equal opportunity of development of his own capacities, be they large or small in range. Moreover, each has needs of his own, as significant to him as those of others are to them. The very fact of natural and psychological inequality is all the more reason for establishment by law of equality of opportunity, since otherwise the former becomes a means of oppression of the less gifted. ✓

While what we call intelligence may be distributed in unequal amounts, it is the democratic faith that it is sufficiently general so that each individual has something to contribute whose value can be assessed only as it enters

into the final pooled intelligence constituted by the contributions of all. Every authoritarian scheme, on the contrary, assumes that its value may be assessed by some *prior* principle, if not of family and birth or race and color or possession of material wealth, then by the position and rank a person occupies in the existing social scheme. The democratic faith in equality is the faith that each individual shall have the chance and opportunity to contribute whatever he is capable of contributing and that the value of his contribution be decided by its place and function in the organized total of similar contributions, not on the basis of prior status of any kind whatever.

I have emphasized in what precedes the importance of the effective release of intelligence in connection with personal experience in the democratic way of living. I have done so purposely because democracy is so often and so naturally associated in our minds with freedom of *action*, forgetting the importance of freed intelligence which is necessary to direct and to warrant freedom of action. Unless freedom of individual action has intelligence and informed conviction back of it, its manifestation is almost sure to result in confusion and disorder. The democratic idea of freedom is not the right of each individual to *do* as he pleases, even if it be qualified by adding "provided he does not interfere with the same freedom on the part of others." While the idea is not always, not often enough, expressed in words, the basic freedom is that of freedom of *mind* and of whatever degree of freedom of action and experience is necessary to produce freedom of intelligence. The modes of freedom guaranteed in the Bill of Rights are all of this nature: freedom of belief and conscience, of expression of opinion, of assembly for discussion and conference, of the press as an organ of communication. They are guaranteed because without them individuals are not free to develop and society is deprived of what they might contribute.

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There is some kind of government, of control, wherever affairs that concern a number

of persons who act together are engaged in. It is a superficial view that holds government is located in Washington and Albany. There is government in the family, in business, in the church, in every social group. There are regulations, due to custom if not to enactment, that settle how individuals in a group act in connection with one another.

It is a disputed question of theory and practice just how far a democratic political government should go in control of the conditions of action within special groups. At the present time, for example, there are those who think the federal and state governments leave too much freedom of independent action to industrial and financial groups, and there are others who think the government is going altogether too far at the present time. I do not need to discuss this phase of the problem, much less to try to settle it. But it must be pointed out that if the methods of regulation and administration in vogue in the conduct of secondary social groups are non-democratic, whether directly or indirectly or both, there is bound to be an unfavorable reaction back into the habits of feeling, thought and action of citizenship in the broadest sense of that word. The way in which any organized social interest is controlled necessarily plays an important part in forming the dispositions and tastes, the attitudes, interests, purposes

and desires, of those engaged in carrying on the activities of the group. For illustration, I do not need to do more than point to the moral, emotional and intellectual effect upon both employers and laborers of the existing industrial system. Just what the effects specifically are is a matter about which we know very little. But I suppose that every one who reflects upon the subject admits that it is impossible that the ways in which activities are carried on for the greater part of the waking hours of the day; and the way in which the share of individuals is involved in the management of affairs in such a matter as gaining a livelihood and attaining material and social security, can not but be a highly important factor in shaping personal dispositions; in short, forming character and intelligence.

In the broad and final sense all institutions are educational in the sense that they operate to form the attitudes, dispositions, abilities and disabilities that constitute a concrete personality. . . . Whether this educative process is carried on in a predominantly democratic or non-democratic way becomes, therefore, a question of transcendent importance not only for education itself but for its final effect upon all the interests and activities of a society that is committed to the democratic way of life.

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51 • *Democracy as Community: Shared Activity*

In the following selection, John Dewey explores another facet of the thesis that democracy is a way of life. Here he says that democracy is the clear consciousness of community, in all its various meanings. It is a way of life that values the individual, but it is not an individualistic conception in the sense of every individual for himself. Rather, democracy has its being in and through communal association. Further, Dewey argues that the meaning of liberty, equality, and fraternity becomes distorted and warped when these values are separated from community life.

Regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself. It is an ideal in the only intelligible sense of an ideal: namely, the tendency and movement of some thing which exists carried to its final limit, viewed as completed, perfected. Since things do not attain such fulfillment but are in actuality distracted and interfered with, democracy in this sense is not a fact and never will be. But neither in this sense is there or has there ever been anything which is a community in its full measure, a community unalloyed by alien elements. The idea or ideal of a community presents, however, actual phases of associated life as they are freed from restrictive and disturbing elements, and are contemplated as having attained their limit of development. Wherever there is conjoint activity whose consequences are appreciated as good by all singular persons who take part in it, and where the realization of the good is such as to effect an energetic desire and effort to sustain it in being just because it is a good shared by all, there is in so far a community. The clear consciousness of a communal life, in all its implications, constitutes the idea of democracy.

Only when we start from a community as a fact, grasp the fact in thought so as to clarify and enhance its constituent elements, can we reach an idea of democracy which is not utopian. The conceptions and shibboleths which are traditionally associated with the idea of democracy take on a veridical and directive meaning only when they are construed as marks and traits of an association which realizes the defining characteristics of a community. Fraternity, liberty and equality isolated from communal life are hopeless abstractions. Their separate assertion leads to mushy sentimentalism or else to extravagant and fanatical violence which in the end defeats its own aims. Equality then becomes a creed of mechanical identity which is false to facts and impossible of realization. Effort to attain it

is divisive of the vital bonds which hold men together; as far as it puts forth issue, the outcome is a mediocrity in which good is common only in the sense of being average and vulgar. Liberty is then thought of as independence of social ties, and ends in dissolution and anarchy. It is more difficult to sever the idea of brotherhood from that of a community, and hence it is either practically ignored in the movements which identify democracy with Individualism, or else it is a sentimentally appended tag. In its just connection with communal experience, fraternity is another name for the consciously appreciated goods which accrue from an association in which all share, and which give direction to the conduct of each. Liberty is that secure release and fulfillment of personal potentialities which take place only in rich and manifold association with others: the power to be an individualized self making a distinctive contribution and enjoying in its own way the fruits of association. Equality denotes the unhampered share which each individual member of the community has in the consequences of associated action. It is equitable because it is measured only by need and capacity to utilize, not by extraneous factors which deprive one in order that another may take and have. A baby in the family is equal with others, not because of some antecedent and structural quality which is the same as that of others, but in so far as his needs for care and development are attended to without being sacrificed to the superior strength, possessions and matured abilities of others. Equality does not signify that kind of mathematical or physical equivalence in virtue of which any one element may be substituted for another. It denotes effective regard for whatever is distinctive and unique in each, irrespective of physical and psychological inequalities. It is not a natural possession but is a fruit of the community when its action is directed by its character as a community.

52 • Equality and Fraternity

Dewey's discussion of the social roots and general nature of democracy has provided an orientation to the subject. We now need to examine in more detail some of the conceptual elements of democracy, among them freedom, equality, and fraternity. In this selection and in Selection 53, the concepts of equality and fraternity will be explored. These terms are familiar to us. We find the word *equality* used in many different situations—in arithmetic, in political and economic discussions, in religious sermons, to mention only a few. The word *fraternity* is less frequently encountered, but its equivalent, *brotherly association*, is experienced in a variety of forms in our everyday activities. Hence we come to any discussion of these aspects of democracy with meanings of them borrowed from numerous experiences. Many of these meanings are inadequate and actually misleading when applied to human associations. Only zealous watchfulness on our part can prevent these inappropriate meanings from impeding our understanding of democracy.

From an educational standpoint, few aspects of democracy are as important as equality and fraternity. We hear a great deal about freedom in education, and rightfully so, for freedom is a significant aspect of the school in a democratic society. But equality and fraternity are perhaps even more fundamental. It has been said that the basic idea upon which the public school is founded is that of equality among all persons, regardless of color, religion, or social status, and it is certainly true that this concept must govern the teacher in his direction and guidance of pupils. If there were no other reasons, this one alone would be sufficient justification for the teacher to try to bring his conception of equality into line with democratic interpretation.

About three decades ago, T. V. Smith, teacher, philosopher, and former Congressman from Illinois, stated the meaning of fraternity and equality in an essay entitled *The Democratic Way of Life*. Recently this essay, which has become a classic exposition of the subject, was revised and issued under the same cover as an essay on democracy by Eduard C. Lindeman, sociologist and leader in adult education. It is from this new edition that the following stimulating selection was taken.

Perennially there arise in the dreams of men these three goals: liberty, equality, fraternity. And the brightest of these is fraternity. It would be difficult indeed to do justice in words to the glamor that human imagination has thrown over the notion of brotherhood. From time immemorial it has stood like a

divine promise to the deeper longings that men have had about themselves and their destiny.

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On its intensive side, fraternity reduces in its essence to something closely resembling love. But the word itself means a relation be-

[From T. V. Smith and Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Democratic Way of Life*, New American Library, 1951, pp. 23-24, 60-61, 66-76. Reprinted by permission of T. V. Smith and Robert Gessner, literary executor of the Eduard C. Lindeman estate.]

tween brothers. Fraternity is thus a family ideal, with all the intimacy and feeling involved in that most closed of social unions. It is that merely at the beginning. Historically, man has insisted upon a closed family organization, exclusive and intimate, partly at least by way of compensation for the failure of friendship on a larger scale. If the family must stand alone, then of course must it stand four square.

Plato had noticed the tendency of the family to squander loyalty upon itself. Because his heart was set upon making the fraternal unit as wise as the whole city-state, he felt it necessary to abolish the family as far as possible, since it was proving an enemy of the larger loyalty. If a man cannot lose himself to the heart of the whole herd, then he will insist upon having exclusive right to one or to a few hearts in which he may shuffle off his coil of individual loneliness. For some deep-lying reason . . . human life is not good if detached. But man, who is completely cowed if he feels that he is really alone, will brave the whole universe when he knows that he is reinforced unequivocally by a few loving hearts.

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Still the fact that a man will find satisfaction in life with a very few comrades does not necessarily mean that his deeper nature does not crave the indefinite enlargement of friendly contacts. Families have grown into clans, clans expanded to tribes, and tribes have grown into nations. The human touch tends to grow from more to more. The intrinsic good of intimate kindliness, when objectified, furnishes a goal in terms of which to conceive an ideal community where all would not only have friends, but be friends.

* * *

Nothing is more certain in the realm of human relations than that a substantial measure of equality of conditions are what men mean by brotherhood. Equality is, indeed, so close a counterpart of the fraternal ideal that it may almost be said to be a part of it rather than a means to it. If two men have been bosom friends in poverty and one of them

becomes wealthy, their friendship is most likely the normal sacrifice exacted by the "God of Things as They Are." If close contact be artificially maintained for a time between those who are grossly unequal economically, a leveling that is both psychological and spiritual goes on. Those who are much and closely together build characters that are in truth joint products. If a slave is raised by association with a superior master, then the master is lowered by association with the inferior slave. The Assyrian conqueror on the bas-relief, as Herbert Spencer was fond of pointing out, is himself tied to the rope by which he leads the prisoners. In a manner that has been regarded as mystic, a new presence seems to arise where two or three are gathered together in any name. ✓

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How far are we to go . . . in contradiction of the facts as touching equality? Men simply are not equal, and that is the end of all concrete discussion of the matter. Let it be replied that, in the first place, we are not talking about facts alone, but about facts and action. Action implies ideals. To act at all, as Justice Holmes teaches us, "is to affirm the worth of an end." If men had never mixed with the facts such ideals as gradually re-oriented the facts themselves, we should have now but few of the resources that go to make up what the modern man takes for granted. Our present purpose does not, therefore, obligate us to bow in adoration of the facts. But there is no reason on the other side why we should shrink from a consideration of the relation of the facts to the ideal that democracy has insisted upon. What can equality as an ideal mean in the light of the present facts that constitute its setting?

Are we to answer, with Rousseau, that it is because men are unequal by nature that society ought always to aim to make them equal? In a certain sense this represents the democratic spirit. We may admit that we cannot prove that men are equal, but we shall certainly go on to affirm that the case for equality does not depend upon proving that men *are* equal, or even that they *should be*

made equal. Even granting the prematurely bold assertion of a modern scientist that "differential psychology utterly blasts the hopes of the older equality theorists," the question remains: How ought we as men to treat other men in order to maximize human goods?

* * *

When we try honestly to answer that question, it is clear, as previously indicated, that, quite apart from esoteric questions of metaphysics, we must treat men in some sense as equals. This we may state to ourselves either negatively or positively. Negatively, we may say that men are as a matter of fact unequal. The more obviously unequal they are seen to be, indeed, the more specifically we detail their characteristics. Then our task becomes how to find out what their authentic, rather than their specious, inequalities are. It is as easy as it is unjust to assume inequality on the basis of race, or creed, or color, and then proceed to waste precious human talents. It is not easy but it is fruitful to discover the actual inequalities of men. This discovery enables us to let each man shine where he can and serve where he must. Such award takes the sting of aggression out of any required subordination. On this approach, we must give men equal opportunities in order to discover and to turn to full account their different abilities. There is indeed no way of disclosing inequalities save by giving the breaks to all the children of men, regardless of race, creed or color.

* * *

And our equality ideal must mean that our treatment of men is not to be predicated on the capacity for enjoyment or profit which they display at a given time, ignoring their antecedents and opportunities, but, instead, that we must count for a fact the capacity that might be developed through equal opportunity at self-improvement. This means that no practice aiming at greater justice can ignore the fundamental fact that man is a growing animal and that his birthright is fulfillment of his capacities.

Our equalitarian formula must initially mean at least equality of consideration, in

order that it may mean something more than this in the end. Only after long sustained treatment of a most humane type—certainly not before—can we pass intelligent judgment upon the more recondite question as to whether men are naturally equal. That is, we must follow Aristotle in preferring to base our judgments concerning men on their highest potentiality, rather than upon any given actuality of attainment, though of course we require to go far beyond Aristotle by applying this dictum to all men rather than to a few. We are not as democrats disturbed by the probable fact that after such indulgence men will still be unequal. What disturbs us is, rather, that without this treating of men as equal, we can never know what their deep and genuine *inequalities* are and so cannot turn them to constructive, rather than aggressive, account.

Moreover, for man to come to his highest and best, he must have more than food and clothing and gregarious indulgence. It is men, not brutes, that we are here considering. The inexpugnable grain of truth in Aristotle's characterization of man as a rational animal is this: man is capable of becoming an end-guided, rather than a mere pressure-propelled animal. Like other animals, he is not only sometimes pushed from behind by impulse or habit; but, in addition he has the capacity of being drawn by visions of the desirable that spring out of his lacks.

Upon the basis of this capacity Immanuel Kant demanded that every human being should be treated as an end, never as a mere means. Now, to treat every man as thus prescribed is to permit him to regulate his conduct by ends that are genuinely his, rather than someone else's handed down to him. This denial of first-hand experience is the most dishonoring form the inequality ideal has taken in the past, and it is largely because of its relation to this that poverty itself must be lessened if democratic ideals are not to be progressively mocked.

In every field of life heretofore, the rule has been for a few men alone to capture the visions of what is to be done and then to direct other men to further their insights. Most of

the work of the world has been done without the workers having any adequate notions as to what ultimate purpose their work was to subserve. Not only in manual labor is this true; but social and even religious ideals have been handed down to the majority of men as too sacred for anything except acceptance, adoration, or literal application. The equality ideal must begin by meaning this highly important thing: that every man shall be entitled to understand and progressively to create the ends for which his energy is expended. If it begins thus, it will not end until it means that every man is entitled to develop the kind of character that can in turn create purposes that outrun the moment and transcend the merely egoistic. ✓

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Few theorists have ever thought for long of giving all persons exactly the same amount of land, income or other property. It is purely for contemplation and certainly too impractical for perpetration. The sheer engineering feat involved would be staggering, especially if the dogmatic socialist included in his aim the keeping of the amounts equal. But capitulation in this regard must not be taken as a rationalized defense of any status quo of distribution. It is highly expedient that if the ideals of democracy are to remain dynamic, as they must, there shall be a steady impetus toward equalization as each generation comes along.

The impetus need never lead to a complete sameness of anything; but it ought not to stop short of at least two general objectives: *no leisure except upon the discharge of productive function*; and *no one to have a superfluity until everyone has enough for healthy life and wholesome growth*.

Let no exception be made as regards the first objective. In a world in which most people have to struggle and many to slave, there is, in justice, no room for mere idlers. Our formula is justified not merely by the fact that toil is intensified to many when many bear no part, but also by the further fact that there is no other way of developing a democratic fellow-feeling save through a

live participation in the productive processes of mankind.

* * *

Since most men must work, there is no other ground so potent for real brotherhood as is economically productive labor. A few outside the process might be brothers to one another, but their fraternity would be so exotic that most men would be forever ineligible. They themselves would be also ineligible for the greater brotherhood; and so the democratic ideal of a cosmopolitan brotherhood is frustrated through preciosity.

As household functions further decline and birth control further increases, the activity of women comes full under this stricture. If yachting and philandering are not forms of masculine productivity, then gossiping and card playing are hardly forms of feminine productivity. The physical and intellectual and moral fiber of "society" women indicates all too familiarly that what deprives society impoverishes the individual also. For the sake of women, therefore, it is well that they be brought gently under our mild formula.

This insistence upon work as the basis of democratic fraternity is not to be interpreted as a resigned acceptance of the lowest level of cooperation in order to have any, but it serves to suggest that we must have such transvaluation of values as to cease to feel that productive work is lowest. That view is a holdover of culture that connected work with slavery and social inferiority. And at that whole *Weltanschauung*, democracy strikes a body blow. In the name, therefore, of equality we must refuse to let any men or women be superior enough to other men or women as to live without participating in some productive work.

We shall not be so inflexible, however, regarding certain exceptions to our other formula, that is, that everyone shall have a wage consistent with growth. Some men's characters have been so warped by early training in the industrial deadening of work that they will prove as recalcitrant to the ideal at the one end of the scale as the idle rich at the other end. Heroic re-education may be necessary for some poor men and for some rich

women. To make security universal would probably, in spite of the fact that man is naturally an active animal, be inadequate to guarantee sincere participation in the productive process by all the poor. Democracy must not substitute for a small class of rich idlers a much larger class of poor idlers. In our present inequalities we seldom allow men actually to starve. We shall certainly not let them starve in a regimen more democratic than our present society; but we shall use the possibility of quasi-starvation to enlist men in a

fair trial of the joy of productive work. Perhaps our equality maxim should go no further than to guarantee unconditionally what Bertrand Russell once called a "vagabond wage," for those who remain recalcitrant to the appeal to productive participation. This small contingency aside, no one who shows a willingness to work and any smouldering desire to grow intellectually, artistically, aesthetically, shall be hopelessly held down by economic lacks when comes the democratic age.

53 • *Legal and Substantive Equality*

In the foregoing selection, equality was discussed largely from a moral standpoint, although its economic base was explicitly recognized in Smith's formula: No leisure without first producing, and no great wealth until everyone has enough for wholesome development. The following selection emphasizes the legal and economic aspects of equality. It explores the historical roots of equality, in the age when feudalism and its remnants in the modern period bound some men to their jobs and inferior status and conferred upon others, by custom and legal machinery, special privileges and great wealth. When discriminatory laws and customs were swept away, giving the working man the same standing before the law as any person of privilege and making it possible for any person to climb in the economic scale without being hampered unjustly by legal barriers erected specially to keep him down, many people believed that equality had finally been established. In the eyes of the law if not of the government, the opportunity of each individual to acquire wealth was equal to that of anyone else. Of course, some men were more intelligent and energetic than others and hence could gain more for themselves. But this fact did not invalidate the apparent truth that men at last had equal opportunities to use whatever ability and energy nature had given them to advance themselves.

This conception of equality is still widely accepted in American society, but in recent decades it has been severely criticized as inadequate in the new social and economic conditions resulting from the growth of science and technology. In these new conditions, men are still equal in opportunity to use their ability and energy so far as legal enactments and machinery are concerned, but now they find themselves handicapped by unequal social and economic conditions. These inequalities have always existed, but in the days of free land, undeveloped resources, and small shops they were of little consequence. Today, however, it is painfully clear that an individual who begins

life with well-to-do parents and the opportunity to acquire higher education and to know people in key positions in business, industry, politics, and the professions often has an advantage in the race of life over individuals less fortunate in birth and upbringing. This fact has encouraged efforts to reduce the disparity, often through legislation, such as that establishing minimum wage laws, unemployment compensation, old-age security, and minimum education levels.

The two conceptions of equality mentioned above are explored extensively in the following passage, an excerpt from the classic work on equality by the English scholar and social scientist R. H. Tawney.

The transformation effected by the attack on legal privilege was beneficent and profound. It had been the child of economic necessity, and the impetus which it gave to progress in the arts which enrich mankind needs no emphasis. With the abolition of restrictions on freedom of movement, on the choice of occupations, and on the use of land and capital, imprisoned energies were released from the narrow walls of manor and guild and corporate town, from the downward pressure of class status, and from the heavy hand of authoritarian governments, to unite in new forms of association, and by means of them to raise the towering structure of industrial civilization.

It was not only in the stimulus which it supplied to the mobilization of economic power that the movement which levelled legal privilege revealed its magic. Its effect as an agent of social emancipation was not less profound. Few principles have so splendid a record of humanitarian achievement. The monopoly of political power by corrupt and tyrannical minorities had everywhere been, not merely a practice, but an unquestioned principle of political organization; with the extension of political democracy its legal basis disappeared, and, if it survived as a fact, it lost the respectability of an institution established by law. Careers of profit and distinction had been reserved, as of right, to birth and wealth; now the barriers fell and all em-

ployments, at least in theory, were open to all. Slavery and serfdom had survived the exhortations of the Christian Church, the reforms of enlightened despots, and the protests of humanitarian philosophers from Seneca to Voltaire. Before the new spirit, and the practical exigencies of which it was the expression, they disappeared, except from dark backwaters, in three generations. From the time when men first reflected on social problems, the social problem of Europe, tragic, insistent, and unsolved, had been the condition of the peasant. Now, at last, in most parts of the Continent, he came to his own. Increasingly, though by different methods and with varying degrees of completeness—by confiscation, as in France, or the division of estates, as in Germany, or purchase, as in Ireland—the nineteenth century saw the end of the system under which the cultivator paid part of his produce to an absentee owner, and the last chapter of the story which began in 1789 has been written in eastern Europe since 1918. Reform did not, indeed, bring him economic affluence, but it ended the long nightmare of legal oppression. It turned him from a beast of burden into a human being. It determined that, when science should be invoked to increase the output of the soil, its cultivator, not an absentee owner, should reap the fruits. The principle which released him he described as equality, the destruction of privilege, democracy, the victory of

[From R. H. Tawney, *Equality*, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1931, pp. 119-125, 139-144. Reprinted by permission of George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., Publishers. Footnotes omitted.]

plain people. He understood by it, not the mathematical parity of pecuniary incomes, to proving the impossibility of which so much needless ingenuity has been devoted, but the end of institutions which had made rich men tyrants and poor men slaves.

The movement which equalized legal rights not only released new productive energies, and cut down a forest of ancient abuses; it supplied with their principles the architects who built on the space that it had cleared. It had not attacked all forms of inequality, but only those which had their roots in special advantages conferred on particular groups by custom or law. It was not intolerant of all social gradations, but only of such as rested on legal privilege. The distinctions of wealth and power which survived when these anomalies had been removed, it surrounded with a halo of intellectual prestige and ethical propriety. It condemned the inequalities of the feudal past; it blessed the inequalities of the industrial future.

The second gesture was as important as the first. The great industry, even in its violent youth, had many excellences, but the equalitarian virtues, if not wholly absent, were not conspicuous among them. To the critics in France and England who urged that a new feudalism was arising, in which the contrasts of affluence and misery, of power and helplessness, were not less extreme than in the past, there was an easy answer. It was that such contrasts did, indeed, exist, but that they differed in principle from those which had preceded them.

The inequalities of the old régime had been intolerable because they had been arbitrary, the result not of differences of personal capacity, but of social and political favouritism. The inequalities of industrial society were to be esteemed, for they were the expression of individual achievement or failure to achieve. They were twice blessed. They deserved moral approval, for they corresponded to merit. They were economically beneficial, for they offered a system of prizes and penalties. So it was possible to hate the inequalities most characteristic of the eighteenth century and to applaud those most characteristic of

the nineteenth. The distinction between them was that the former had their origin in social institutions, the latter in personal character. The fact of the equality of legal rights could be cited as a reason why any other kind of equality was unnecessary or dangerous.

* * *

Inequality had been justified in the eighteenth century on the ground that distinctions of rank were the will of Providence and the necessary foundations of social stability. Later generations were less certain of the intentions of Providence, and less confident that they supplied the social system with a reliable foundation. They defended inequality less as the expression of the varying stations assigned to different classes by the will of the Creator, than as the necessary and beneficial result of the spontaneous play of economic forces.

The abolition of capricious favours and arbitrary restrictions had enlarged the field of economic opportunity. The wider diffusion of economic opportunities secured the selection of individuals according to their capacities, through a social analogue of the biological struggle. If extreme inequality was the final consequence, that result merely meant that men's capacities were unequal. Instead of the class into which he was born determining, as in the past, the position of the individual, the quality of the individual determined his position, and therefore his class.

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Thus the flank of the criticism of economic inequality was turned by the argument that it was the necessary result of legal equality and economic liberty. Rightly interpreted, equality meant, not the absence of violent contrasts of income and condition, but equal opportunities of becoming unequal. It was true that few could take part in the competition, but no one was forbidden to enter for it, and no handicaps were imposed on those who did. To ensure that it was fair, it was sufficient, it was thought, to insist that the law should neither confer advantages nor impose disabilities.

* *

In reality, of course, except in a sense which is purely formal, equality of opportunity is not simply a matter of legal equality. Its existence depends, not merely on the absence of disabilities, but on the presence of abilities. It obtains in so far as, and only in so far as, each member of a community, whatever his birth, or occupation, or social position, possesses in fact, and not merely in form, equal chances of using to the full his natural endowments of physique, of character, and of intelligence. In proportion as the capacities of some are sterilized or stunted by their social environment, while those of others are favoured or pampered by it, equality of opportunity becomes a graceful, but attenuated, figment. It recedes from the world of reality to that of perorations.

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No one thinks it inequitable that, when a reasonable provision has been made for all, exceptional responsibilities should be compensated by exceptional rewards, as a recognition of the service performed and an inducement to perform it.

* * *

What is repulsive is not that one man should earn more than others, for where community of environment, and a common education and habit of life, have bred a common tradition of respect and consideration, these details of the counting-house are forgotten or ignored. It is that some classes should be excluded from the heritage of civilization which others enjoy, and that the fact of human fellowship, which is ultimate and profound, should be obscured by economic contrasts, which are trivial and superficial. What is important is not that all men should receive the same pecuniary income. It is that the surplus resources of society should be so husbanded and applied that it is a matter of minor significance whether they receive it or not.

* * *

What a community requires is that its work should be done, and done with the minimum of friction and maximum of co-

operation. Gradations of authority and income derived from differences of office and function promote that end; distinctions based, not on objective facts, but on personal claims—on birth, or wealth, or social position—impede its attainment. They sacrifice practical realities to meaningless conventions. They stifle creative activity in an elegant drapery of irrelevant futilities. They cause the position of individuals and the relation of classes to reflect the influence, not primarily of personal quality and social needs, but of external conditions, which offer special advantages to some and impose adventitious disabilities upon others.

* * *

Incomes from personal work obviously stand in a different category from incomes from property. But, even in such incomes, there is normally an element which is due less to the qualities of the individual than to the overruling force of social arrangements. We are all, it is a commonplace to say, disposed to believe that our failures are due to our circumstances, and our successes to ourselves. It is natural, no doubt, for the prosperous professional or business man, who has made his way in the face of difficulties, to regard his achievements as the result of his own industry and ability. When he compares those who have succeeded in his own walk of life with those who have failed, he is impressed by the fact that the former are, on the whole, more enterprising, or forcible, or resourceful, than the latter, and he concludes that the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong.

* * *

In so far as the individuals between whom comparison is made belong to a homogeneous group, whose members have had equal opportunities of health and education, of entering remunerative occupations, and of obtaining access to profitable financial knowledge, it is plausible, no doubt, if all questions of chance and fortune are excluded, to treat the varying positions which they ultimately occupy as the expression of differences in their personal qualities. But, the less homogeneous

the group, and the greater the variety of conditions to which its members have been exposed, the more precarious does such an inference become. If the rules of a game give a permanent advantage to some of the players, it does not become fair merely because they are scrupulously observed by all who take part in it. When the contrast between the circumstances of different social strata is so profound as today, the argument—if it deserves to be called an argument—which suggests that the incomes they receive bear a close relation to their personal qualities is obviously illusory. In reality, as has often been pointed out, explanations which are relevant as a clue to differences between the incomes of indi-

viduals in the same group lose much of their validity when applied, as they often are, to interpret differences between those of individuals in different groups. It would be as reasonable to hold that the final position of competitors in a race were an accurate indication of their physical endowments, if, while some entered fit and carefully trained, others were half-starved, were exhausted by want of sleep, and were handicapped by the starters. If the weights are unequal, it is not less important, but more important, that the scales should be true. The condition of differences of individual quality finding their appropriate expression is the application of a high degree of social art.

54 • Freedom as Effective Choice

In addition to equality and fraternity, *freedom* is a highly significant feature of democracy. But this proposition assumes a specific meaning of the word *freedom*. Like the term *democracy*, freedom is defined in many ways. It has been used to mean "do as you please," absence of all restraint, absence of government restraint in economic affairs, obedience to the will of a leader, and conformity to law, to mention only a few applications of the term. It is also used frequently in educational circles. We talk about the freedom of the pupil in the classroom, and about the freedom of the teacher to engage in the normal political and social activities of a citizen. We speak of the free public school and of the purposes of education in a free society.

What do we mean by "freedom" in all these situations? Do we mean something different in each case? Or do we use the same root meaning of the term with shades of meaning to fit the peculiarities of the circumstances? Those of us who teach are obligated to clarify for ourselves the uses of the word *freedom* just as we are obligated to clarify the meaning of *equality*. We can hardly understand democracy while we are confused about freedom. Moreover, freedom and equality are considered to be the basic values of our way of life, and we are responsible for transmitting that way of life to the growing generation. To pervade the educative process at this level with confusion is to poison the social stream at its source.

The selection which follows and Selections 55 and 56 explore the meaning of freedom lucidly and relate it to certain aspects of our society. Selection 54, from Alan Griffin's widely discussed book *Freedom: American Style*, presents a simple, down-to-

earth analysis of freedom as a general conception and shows how our use of the term differs from the way in which it is used in totalitarian systems. Mr. Griffin is a professor of the teaching of the social studies.

The idea of freedom has always meant either freedom *from* something or freedom *to do* something. A man on a desert island could scarcely be called free even though there is no one to prevent him from doing as he pleases. He is not free to leave the island, or to order a five-course dinner, or to read a book, or to see a movie. He is not free from the necessity for extremely hard work. He enjoys neither freedom of speech nor freedom of the press, because he has no one to speak to, no one to write for. He does not even have freedom of religion if he wishes to take part in the ceremonies of his church. You can see that freedom is something that exists among groups of people—in *society*, as we call people living in communities and nations.

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Some dictionaries define the word *freedom* as "absence of restraint." But freedom is impossible without restraint. For example, if everyone who cared to hang out a sign were free to practice medicine, then *nobody* would be free to practice medicine, because intelligent patients simply would not place themselves in the hands of any man without assurances that his training and experience had enabled him to satisfy a professional board of his competence. Naturally, a great many people who would like to become physicians are prevented from doing so by the difficult requirements of education and training which we have set up. A poor boy may well complain that he is not free to become a doctor, because his family doesn't have enough money; and it is almost certain that the medical profession would have benefited from the ability of some of those who could not afford to become doctors. *The point is that the freedom of the public to get competent medical service is more important than the freedom of*

individuals to make money by practicing medicine. In the same way, every RESTRICTION of freedom in one direction CREATES freedom in another, and every kind of freedom involves restraint.

If it is true that liberty always means the freedom to do something in particular, why is one kind of liberty any better than another? That is what we are being asked by the totalitarian governments of the world—those governments that work for the development of the state, not of the people. The people who believe in totalitarian principles offer this argument: "Since, after all, freedom and restriction go hand in hand, and since freedom to do one thing is secured only by giving up freedom to do another thing, what is the difference between your freedom and ours? We have given up freedom to participate in politics, freedom to choose our leaders every few years, freedom to hold opinions different from those of most people in our society; but we have gained, by so doing, freedom to work, freedom to eat, freedom to belong and to be needed."

It is quite true that every society has secured some kinds of freedom by giving up other kinds. We have seen that a man in the solitude of the desert has few freedoms; but men in the Middle Ages sometimes deliberately sought the solitude of a desert, with all its restraints upon the possibilities of action, in order to be free—free, that is, from what was called "temptation."

No society can base its claim of superiority upon the simple statement, "We have freedom; you do not," because all societies have freedom to do some things, and that freedom can only be secured by giving up freedom to do other things. Why, then, do we prefer our democratic way of life?

The question is one which the democracies

of the world must answer. Unless we can answer it, we simply do not know what we are doing. Freedom involves restriction. We have freedom to do some things, secured by restricting our freedom to do other things. Germans and Italians and Russians have freedom to do some things, secured by restricting their freedom to do other things. This much every fair-minded individual will admit. Why, then, do we feel that our freedom is greater than theirs? Is it a simple matter of taste, like the choice between chocolate and vanilla?

It is very difficult to say that freedom to do one particular thing is "better" than freedom to do another particular thing. The medieval monk could give up almost every freedom known to man, because he considered freedom from temptation more *important* than all other freedoms put together; and it is this matter of importance that complicates the problem of freedom.

* * *

The idea that men may come to understand and to care about *each other's* purposes is a basic idea of democracy. Because we believe that this sharing of concerns is possible, we are able to believe also that men need no dictator to make up rules and to decide which freedoms shall have the right of way and which ones shall be suppressed. We are able to believe that men can understand and share the purposes and points of view of other men and thus arrive at equitable decisions for themselves.

Totalitarian governments do not believe that human beings are capable of this kind of behavior. There is, therefore, one kind of freedom which totalitarian states do not value at all, and which people who believe in democracy value above all other kinds: the freedom of every man to take part in making the decisions which determine what we shall be free to do and what we shall be restricted from doing.

This does not mean that every individual is a law unto himself or that he can determine for himself what he shall be free to do. It means rather that, above all things else, we

cherish and are prepared to defend the right of free men to determine for themselves the central and directing values of their society and to make those rules which shall give the right of way to the things which they have collectively chosen as good. This is at once the greatest amount of liberty possible and the least degree of liberty for which Americans are prepared to settle.

Plato . . . said long ago: "He who serves the purpose of another is a slave." Men are not now lacking, even in our country, who will willfully or blindly miss the meaning of this expression. They will say: "Society cannot hold together if nobody serves the purposes of anybody else. There can be no co-operation, no mutual aid, no efficiency, no singleness of purpose."

To these men, the fact that all of us have our own individual purposes is a fact which tends to weaken our nation as a world power; many of them feel that we, too, ought to set up an official group of purposes, and work toward them.

But Plato, of course, did not mean that everybody who helped his neighbor (and, in this way, served his neighbor's purposes) was enslaved. In helping their neighbors to build houses and barns, or to husk corn, or to clear land, our ancestors served their neighbors' purposes of getting the work done; but they served, at the same time, their own purposes of helping their neighbors. No man could order them to give this service; they gave it because that was the way of life they had chosen for themselves. This is the high point of freedom and the special meaning of freedom in a democracy: men shall be free not only to choose among the choices which are offered; they shall be free also to say *what these choices are to be*. This means not merely freedom of choice, but freedom to have a part in setting up the *possible* choices. For example, in a democracy people are not only free to choose what churches they will attend; they are also free to establish their own churches in the community.

Citizens of totalitarian countries, of course, enjoy one kind of freedom; they can choose what kind of house to build, what foods to

eat (out of the homes and foods that are available), whether to buy an overcoat or a lawn mower. But citizens of totalitarian countries

cannot take part in the decision of *what choices shall be made possible and what choices shall be ruled out.*

55 • Liberty in Relation to Government

We turn now to consideration of freedom—or liberty, as Professor Perry prefers to call it—under government. It may seem strange to talk of liberty as promoted by government, for in America we are accustomed to thinking of government as the enemy of freedom. In fact, we have a deep-seated belief that “that government is best which governs least.” Indeed, the first ten amendments to our federal Constitution guarantee the individual certain freedoms, such as religious worship, assembly, and speech, against interference by the government.

But the government may promote freedom not only by restraining its powers and influence, as the Bill of Rights specifies, but also by positive measures, such as providing schools and information and controlling wages and working conditions. Many of the significant aspects of the relation of government to freedom are discussed in the following selection, by Ralph Barton Perry. Professor Perry, an eminent philosopher, writes on the subject of liberty from his rich background of social and political understanding as well as philosophical insight. In these days, when totalitarian powers are emphasizing the subordination of the individual to the state in the name of freedom and equality, it is well to have the relation of government to liberty explored by one of America’s most penetrating minds.

The liberties on which attention is focused at the present time are those whose meaning is related to government. The first is liberty under government, to which I propose to give the name of legal liberty.

* * *

The most serious hindrance to a man’s interest is the rival interest of his neighbor, and the remedy lies in the systematic delimitation of interests. There is a greater liberty to be enjoyed through the acceptance of such delimi-

tation than through the claim of limitlessness, because the limited liberties are guaranteed and regularized. In short, while the State neither creates nor justifies liberty, it does create security; and it is upon security that the fuller and more constructive liberties of civilization depend.

* * *

If it be the duty of government to promote the liberty of every man, this function must be extended to embrace positive and not merely negative liberty. The most ancient,

[From Ralph Barton Perry, “Liberty in a Democratic State,” in Ruth Nanda Anshen (ed.), *Freedom: Its Meaning*, copyright 1940 by Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., pp. 268-274. Reprinted by permission.]

persistent, and oppressive enemies of liberty are not external hindrances, whether physical or human, but poverty and ignorance. It is the chief fault of prosperous and of enlightened men that they forget this fact. What government does in the way of education, public information, health, housing, increased wages, reduced hours of labor, or the redistribution of wealth may be as much a service of liberty as is its protection of men against interference, from one another or from itself. The distinction between "welfare" and liberty breaks down altogether, since a man's effective liberty is proportional to his resources.

The topic of civil liberty is the most confused, and, next after that of war, the most prominent of contemporary issues. The phrase has at least five distinct meanings which are, unhappily, not distinguished. It is sometimes used to mean legal liberty, in the sense already discussed above. It is sometimes used to mean political liberty, in the sense to be discussed below. It is sometimes used, without definition, to refer to an indeterminate list of specific liberties: the liberties of speech, press, assembly, and religion, as interpreted in judicial decisions; the so-called "inalienable" rights of life, liberty, and property or happiness; the rights of petition, habeas corpus, "due process" of law, trial by jury, and the inviolability of the home or person; together with other rights embraced under the broad formulas of "common law rights," or "the rights of Englishmen." It is sometimes used, again without definition, to refer to a narrower group of the liberties listed above, namely, those liberties which have to do most directly with the effective public utterance of opinion. Finally, civil liberty is sometimes taken to mean such liberties as the above, when conceived as limiting the powers of the executive and legislative branches of the government, or of the government "in power," and as entrusted to some more considered procedure, such as the framing or amendment of the constitution, or decisions by courts having a constitutional jurisdiction.

The expression "civil liberty" will here be

employed in the fifth of these senses, in the sense, namely, of constitutional liberty. Civil liberty defines the line between the use and the abuse of the powers of government. It has meaning only in a political philosophy, such as democracy, in which it is affirmed that government, instead of being an end in itself, possesses obligations beyond itself. It signifies what, to use Jefferson's expression, "the people are entitled to against every government on earth."

The principle of civil liberty implies a tendency of government to defeat its legitimate end and become an abuse rather than a utility. There are three ways in which government may become the enemy of liberty: by disloyalty, by excess, and by inefficiency.

By disloyalty of government is here meant any deviation from its public function due to the private self-interest of the ruler. It signifies the chronic evil, and the chronic suspicion, associated with the name of tyranny. The popularity of government does not suffice to save it from tyranny, but may create new forms of tyranny. Thus popular government lends itself to the tyranny of the majority or of the masses; and to the tyranny of the demagogue, who conceals his self-interest by flattering the people, and appeals to their baser instincts against their reflective judgment. The corrective of tyranny in these popular forms does not lie in relating government more closely to the existing will of those who live under it, but in a scrupulous regard for the liberty of minorities or dissenting individuals, and in a system of popular education that shall emancipate the critical faculties and develop a resistance to irrational appeal.

Liberty may be conceived as a just claim not only against disloyal government, or tyranny, but also against excessive government, or paternalism. A popular government is peculiarly liable to this abuse. It tends to be trusted by those who live under it, since it speaks in their name; and it tends to be invoked by them as a utility, since they feel it is their creature.

The issue of liberty versus excessive government derives its present meaning to most Americans from the application to "business."

The beginning of sound thinking on this matter is to see that the economic system known as *laissez-faire* capitalism is not an effect of "the silence of the law," but is founded on legal rights. Men who are merely let alone to do as they please do not compete with one another, they plunder one another. "Free competition" depends no more on letting men do as they please, than on preventing them from doing as they please, and forcing them to do as they do not please. The only question regarding government's interference with business is whether it shall interfere more or less, and in old ways or new ways. The only democratic principle applicable to this question is the principle that the restraints imposed by government shall be justified by their positive fruitfulness to the individuals living under government. Judged by this standard, government is always excessive when it is exercised for its own sake.

Civil rights protect men, in the third place, from the inefficiency of government, that is from the malfunctioning of its mechanisms and agencies. Considering the instruments at its command, government will sometimes most effectively serve liberty by leaving the regulation of private interests to private institutions, such as church, school, or charitable organization, or to the unofficial power of the social conscience. Thus the agencies which will effectively regulate opinion, sentiment, science, and art are coarse instruments, unsuited to so delicate an operation. If a hammer and saw were the only tools of surgery, it would be difficult to remove the diseased portions of the body without injuring the adjoining parts. Similarly, the mechanisms of public enforcement are ill suited to distinguish between art and pornography, or between science and dogma, or between persuasion and propaganda, or between education and indoctrination.

Every instrument may be dulled or broken by overuse. A State which is asked to do too much may do nothing well. Its functions may increase more rapidly than its competence. It is prudent, therefore, to limit the functions of the State out of regard for the human limitations of its rulers.

The inefficiency of government may consist not in the imperfection of its own instruments, but in its failure to profit by other instruments. It is self-evident that the State should derive the utmost public benefit from the motive of private self-interest. There is an area within which public and private interest coincide, and here the motive of private interest may be stronger and more reliable than the disinterestedness of government, and its use more economical.

Civil liberty sets limits to the government in power, and its rationale lies in the fact that the government in power tends, unless restrained, to tyranny, paternalism, and inefficiency. There are certain liberties which are justified not as a protection of the individual against government, but as indispensable to the functioning of government. Any civil liberty when so justified becomes a "political" liberty. It is not easy to circumscribe the liberties which should be here included. There is no doubt, however, regarding those liberties which enable the individual to form judgments for himself, and communicate them to his fellow-men. Among these liberties are the liberties of speech, of press, of assembly, and of religion, when these are conceived as essential to the processes of political democracy. So-called "academic freedom," embracing the liberties of research and of teaching, may be considered as an application of the same principle, as many liberties of radio or cinema, or any other form of communication which advancing technology may devise.

The meaning of these political liberties depends on the assumption that a distinction can be made between judgment and practice. The liberty to judge that property should be held in common does not imply a liberty to practice communism; the liberty to hold the theory of free trade does not imply the liberty to bring goods across the frontier without paying the duty. Given any act whatsoever there is a distinction between a favorable opinion or sentiment towards acts of that type, and the performance of that act. A similar distinction holds also between persuasion and incitement. The line is difficult to draw, but in principle it is clear that the liberty to

convert others to a judgment which if acted upon would be lawless does not imply the liberty to perform or induce a lawless act.

A democratic polity is pledged to the principles of *enlightenment* and *consent*, and the political liberties are corollaries of these principles. In a State otherwise conceived, as founded on dogma or power, the political liberties have no place.

First, democracy puts its trust in the achievement and dissemination of knowledge. But knowledge can be achieved only by minds which are freed from coercion in order that they may be faithful to evidence. Knowledge is a potential achievement of every inquiring mind. The maximum advance of true knowledge depends on giving to every mind a commission to explore the facts and exercise its reasoning capacities. The essential political liberty is thus liberty of thought, but the liberties of speech, press, assembly, and teaching are also conducive to the achievement of knowledge, through begetting criticism, confirmation, and discussion.

Every liberty is limited by its justifying principle. Those who claim liberty of judgment and communication for the sake of enlightenment submit themselves to that standard. The liberty of dogmatic affirmation, or of impassioned utterance, or of artfully propagating error, or of silencing opponents, or of personal polemics, cannot be justified as conducive to the achievement and spread of knowledge. Such liberties may be claimed, and perhaps rightly granted, on other grounds; but every thinker, speaker, writer, or teacher who claims liberty in order that he may contribute to knowledge is thereby pledged to intellectual sobriety, disinterestedness, and good faith.

Second, the liberties of judgment and communication are essential to the constitution of the democratic State as conditions of that consent from which government derives its just authority. The fundamental principle of political democracy is not the agreement of the people with the government, but the agreement of the government with the people. If this is to occur there must be an antecedent

and independent agreement among the people themselves.

Here again the justifying principle imposes limits on liberty. If liberty is to be claimed on the ground of consent, then its exercise must conduce to consent, in the sense of agreement of government with a popular choice freely and independently formed. This argues that the government must refrain from dictating the decision from which it derives its mandate. It must not only avoid interference, but must positively assist the people to choose for themselves. But consent also implies a thoughtful decision, that is, an act of deliberate choice from among the relevant alternatives. He who defends the liberty of judgment and communication on the ground of consent cannot claim a right to use this liberty merely for purposes of intimidation, emotional excitation, or hypnotic suggestion.

Political liberty may be exercised in relation to the government in power; or in relation to the political constitution, taken as embracing the principle of political liberty itself. The first of these uses of political liberty is its partisan use, and the second its revolutionary use.

It is evident that if the existing government is to rest on consent, its policies must have been, and must continue to be debatable pro and con. The recognized device by which government by consent is obtained is through the party system, by which a single party or block of parties assumes the powers of government for a limited time. It is an essential feature of this procedure that the election should be preceded by a free discussion of issues and candidates, and the government elected is supposed to conform its policies to the judgment which has prevailed. Consent is periodically renewed or withdrawn by the same processes as those by which it is originally given. Thus the party in power, at the same time that it frames statutes and performs administrative acts in accordance with the popular mandate from which it derived its authority, must also respect the political liberties of its opponents, which may be used for its own defeat. Every party will have two loyalties, to itself and to the broad purpose of the system at large.

56 • Liberty and the Law

In the following selection, Robert MacIver furthers the discussion of the relation of government to freedom by considering the question of whether or not freedom is possible without law. If freedom cannot exist in the absence of law, what is the relation of law to individual freedom?

Many of us tend to think that man is free in a state of nature and that under government he is enslaved. The pioneer in early American life is the prototype of the free man; the laborer regimented in the modern factory lives in the antithesis of freedom—or so it seems to many people. But this view of freedom is erroneous. Freedom is not achieved escaping from society with its laws and regulations. Rather, it is achieved *within* society, for order is but the counterpart of freedom. "Freedom" from traffic regulations, for example, would not constitute true liberty, for the absence of restraint in this instance would lead to chaos; few individuals, if any, would survive a day's driving without mishap. In this situation, a few regulations, restraining a few individuals, spells more freedom for every individual. So it is with all laws. They restrain some persons and free others to do specific things. But who is being restrained and who is being freed—and for what purpose? This question is the subject of the following selection, by Robert M. MacIver, an eminent American sociologist and social philosopher.

Wc, being with those who honestly accept the universal meaning, but being led to define it by the double negative, as the absence of restraint, are never able to see it positively again and fall in consequence into immediate error. Their argument runs as follows: liberty is the absence of restraint, therefore all restraint is a curtailment of liberty. They reason in the void of their negatives. Shall we, to bring them back to common sense, add yet another negative, and ask them, What then of the restraint of restraint? Is it not obvious that liberty—except on a desert island where, alas, it is an unprized commodity—is subject to constant invasion and must be constantly safeguarded? Is it not obvious that the absence of restraint, whereby men in society enjoy any kind of liberty, is the presence of

superior restraint on the forces that would suppress this liberty?

Here the commonest form of error is that which rests on the simple antithesis of the realm of liberty and the realm of law; one the "free" life of man in nature or in nonpolitical society and the other the coercive order of the State. Many writers on liberty have been content with this untenable antithesis. It was the view of Thomas Hobbes that liberty existed only in the interstices of law. And his contention has been upheld with undiminished vigor by many later schools, by the utilitarians such as Bentham and Mill, by the Neo-Darwinians such as Herbert Spencer, by the robust individualists and nature-worshippers after the manner of Thoreau, by the philosophical anarchists, and by the economic

[From Robert M. MacIver, "The Meaning of Liberty and Its Perversions," in Ruth Nanda Anshen (ed.), *Freedom: Its Meaning*, copyright 1940 by Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., pp. 280-284. Reprinted by permission.]

conservatives who at the present day echo the sentiments of Herbert Hoover's trumpet blast, *The Challenge to Liberty*. Every law, they say, is an encroachment on liberty. Every new law reduces yet further the shrunken area of liberty.

Yet the argument is most patently fallacious. You cannot *think* about it without discovering its error. True, every law restrains *some* liberty for *some*. But in so doing it may well establish some other liberty for some others—or indeed for all. The law that forbids an employer to dismiss a worker because he joins a trade union gives the worker a liberty that, as worker, he lacked before. The law that forbids another to trespass on my property assures me the liberty to enjoy my property. Every law establishes an obligation, but the obligation is the reverse side of a right. The obligation may lie on the many and the right rest in the few, as for example under a law imposing a censorship of opinion. Or the right may be established for the many and the corresponding obligation be imposed on the few, as when a law compels factory-owners to introduce safety devices. Since liberty does not exist in the void but in the relations between men, all liberties depend on restraints just as all rights depend on obligations. The naive Hobbesian stand ignores this simple truth.

In a deeper sense too it misapprehends alike the nature of liberty and the nature of law. Laws may be tyrannous, but tyranny is the quality of particular enactments and has nothing to do with the essential character of law. Law is not command, though many jurists have mistakenly defined it so. A legal code is a system regulating human relationships within the frontiers of a State and applying to all who live within it. It is a necessary basis of social order, a guaranty that men will act on certain principles in their intercourse with one another, that, for example, they will fulfill their contracts and will not use violence to gain their ends. Remove this system, and every complex society would be reduced to chaos. Men could not foresee the consequences of their actions, could not undertake any enterprise that looked beyond the

moment, could not possess any security of mind or body. The liberties we possess are relative to the social order in which we live and in large measure are created as well as sustained by that order. When our rights perish our liberties perish too. How vain then is the saying that liberty exists only "in the interstices of law"!

When men define liberty as the absence of restraint, the trouble frequently is that they at once think of some kinds of restraint and forget others altogether. They do not realize that in every society all kinds of restraints and liberties—legal, constitutional, economic, social, moral, religious—inevitably coexist in endless combinations for the different groups who live in the same community. There is no simple totality that may be named *the* liberty of the individual or *the* liberty of the people. When Herbert Hoover, in the book already referred to, speaks of "the American system of liberty," he finds it realized in the particular range of economic liberties that depend on equal *legal* rights, with practically no reference to the opportunities and conditions on which the exercise of these rights depends. He opposes economic controls by government, not on the ground that they are misguided but on the ground that they cause "myriad wounds to liberty." He decries "regimented agriculture" as a blow to liberty, without inquiring whether the farmers, wisely or unwisely, want the "regimentation." He decries "regimented currency," without considering that currency is always "regimented"—by someone. The controls he disapproves, wisely or unwisely, he regards as inconsistent with liberty or even as part of "the American system of liberty." He seems scarcely conscious of the fact that if two thousand individuals are in a position to control or direct half the industry of the country, therein also lies an important aspect of the problem of liberty.

Every law restrains some liberty, but before we can condemn it on that account we must put to ourselves two vital questions. First, *whose* liberty? For every law gives some men something that they will to have or to do, while restraining them, and all other men, in

the contrary direction. Second, *what* liberty? For there are many kinds of liberty, and they conflict one with another, and some can be attained only by the restriction of others, and the advancement of one man's liberty generally means the setting of a limit to the similar liberty of another man. In the simplest terms, when one man or one group dominates another, they arrogate to themselves precisely the kind of liberty over others that they deny the others over themselves. Certain liberties are incompatible with one another, certain liberties are again incompatible with the possession by others of the like liberty. Therefore the answer to the question, *What* liberty? involves always a comparison of liberties and an assessment of their relative values. Here, incidentally, is where the negative definition

of liberty as the absence of restraint proves quite unhelpful. For instance, I regard the liberty of men to think as they please as more important, more valuable, than the liberty of other men to control their thinking. The absence of one kind of restraint means far more to me than the absence of another kind of restraint. So I am driven back to the ultimate, the positive, and yet not further definable meaning of liberty. Then the problem of liberty becomes a far more complex one than it seemed at first, when we were content with the negative definition. For now we have to ask: What combination of liberties and restraints is most serviceable for the existence of what men seek when they place a high value on liberty?

57 • The Relation of Liberty and Equality

We turn now to the question of whether or not equality is opposed to liberty. Some political writers maintain that the more liberty there is in a society, the less the equality among its members, and that an increase of equality results in corresponding loss of freedom. Hence, they assert, democratic ideology contains a fundamental contradiction at its core. Such writers believe, for example, that the freedom of the individual to carry on legitimate economic activities for private profit will be curtailed if he must pay heavy taxes to improve the educational opportunities and living conditions of the underprivileged to the level enjoyed by more fortunate members of society. The price of freedom is the loss of equality. Following this argument, many people who hold freedom to be more dear than equality have been willing to forsake the principle of equality altogether.

On the other hand, such political philosophers as R. H. Tawney, T. V. Smith, and Eduard C. Lindeman have taken a contrary view of the matter. The basic issue, they tell us, lies in our definition of the terms *freedom* and *equality*. We can construe them as contradictory, if we choose to do so, or, if we prefer, as compatible. The choice depends upon the social and political ends to which the definer is committed, not to some meaning inherent in the words themselves. According to this view, in a society in which the big fish eat the little ones, freedom will be defined in contradiction to equality. But in a society in which the little fish are given the maximum opportunity to grow into larger fish, freedom and equality will be defined as compatible terms.

In the following two passages, the question of the compatibility of equality and freedom is explored at some length. The first passage, by T. V. Smith and Eduard C. Lindeman, whose writing we encountered earlier in this chapter, discusses the relation between freedom and equality from the standpoint of economic factors. The second passage, from R. H. Tawney's essay on equality, discusses freedom and equality under the conditions of modern industrialization.

Equality as Essential to Liberty

When we come to the relation between liberty and equality, however, we find a different story. That there is some relationship between these two members of our democratic trinity has always been observed; but its exact nature has been a matter of long dispute. We shall note the divergent opinions only in so far as such notice will throw light on our present contention: the contention, i.e., that what the equality ideal has stood for is necessary in order to make significant liberty available for the majority of men. Even those who have been most sympathetic with democracy have often felt that the insertion of equality into practice produces an embarrassment. Many professing democrats have in fact declared in every age that liberty and equality cannot dwell together. They never equalize, slyly hazards Edmund Burke, who seek to level.

Thus believing, Burke and others have gone on to argue that equality must therefore go, since to them liberty is the dearest of the democratic graces. The historic explanation of this partiality for liberty has been discussed in the preceding chapter. There is, however, no imperative reason why, circumstances changed, the emphasis may not be shifted, as of course it has been shifted, from liberty to equality.

It is indeed notable that the willingness to surrender equality does not usually imply any desire to undo any of the great equalitarian victories already consummated. Each man to

count for one at the ballot and before the law, and nobody to count for more than one at either place—these are everywhere in America, since Alexander Hamilton in the North and John C. Calhoun in the South, regarded as praiseworthy achievements of the democratic impetus. The willingness to surrender equality is indeed more forward than backward looking. Having attained by way of equalization the political and legal means for greater and more concrete opportunities for more and more people, many voices counsel that we should now reap in economic fields the fruits of our earlier political sowing. This is the song of socialism singing itself out everywhere in the world. It is primarily against this tendency that men declaim who fear for liberty. They point out that liberty demands that each is entitled to whatever he can get in a competitive field where no favors are shown. Not only is this principle sound as a principle, they say, but it is an absolutely necessary condition of progressive practice. The fundamental error involved in invading the economic field with an equalitarian program is, according to them, twofold. First, men are economically so different as to be of greatly varying value to the productive process. Second, the only way to marshal the entire economic resource is to let each man profit by his varying gifts. There is no other motive adequate to the high productivity demanded by our modern needs, in a world more and more densely populated. To initiate

[From T. V. Smith and Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Democratic Way of Life*, New American Library, 1951, pp. 62-66. Reprinted by permission of T. V. Smith and Robert Gessner, literary executor of the Eduard C. Lindeman estate.]

a program looking toward equalization of either wealth or of income is, they say, to invite disaster.

When it is countered that such a policy as that advocated by the partisans of liberty involves many people in poverty, the apologist for liberty, if he is tough-minded, will reply, that life is no holiday, that men usually deserve about what they get, and that nothing good comes except through sacrifice. If the apologist be somewhat more tender-minded, he will regret the high cost of progress, he will commiserate the victims; he may even insist upon giving alms or bonuses. Beyond this, even if he be tender-minded, what can he do? Born into a social order not largely of his making, he too has but to manage the best he can; and, as for the rest, a stiff upper lip is an indispensable asset.

If one take all this in complete good faith, he may yet concede that our general case regarding the dependence of liberty upon equality is made out. For the unfortunates whose lot is in debate have no substantial liberty, save to suffer their lot. Liberty is good; their lot is not so good. If one wished to be ironic, he might resurrect the old spiritual palliative and endow the unfortunates with freedom of the will, as inner compensation for outer perpetrations. But all in all we are far enough along to admit that a man who has no other kind of freedom lacks full freedom of the will. The only freedom worth emphasizing is the ability actually to try out one's desires and plans, and the ability to escape unforeseen consequences. The one ability exists only with economic independence, the other only with a liberal education. The only freedom that exists for classes sufficiently submerged is the freedom to resent or to accept their poverty and ignorance, and to get what satisfaction they can from resignation well adapted to protect the more fortunate from malcontenty.

If it be replied that the picture is overdrawn; that all is relative; that, in fact, the per capita income has been steadily rising in America, the standard of living even more, and that education that was once impossible is now actual, college education itself passing

more and more from the luxury class into widespread democratic availability; if all this be replied, as it is replied, then we may adduce that the reply concedes our general case: that the legitimacy of the liberty demand rests upon the equality ideal, and so that when men demand liberty to the exclusion of operative equality, they mean liberty for the few, dependence for the many. This general admission is required so that the admitted relativity of poverty may be approached remedially rather than fatalistically.

Certain it is, at the historic extreme, that liberty which is compatible with slavery is not liberty, however softly purred by apologists for the *status quo*. To call things by their right names is always salutary. If one will but consider the relation to a competence of the chief non-economic goods that are prized universally, the whole point will appear in its full pathos. Wealth itself is a good no little of the value of which is in the getting. Since it takes capital to make capital, the opportunity of many to this creative aspect of the economic life is diminished. Health, another fundamental good of human life, is possessed precariously by the majority of men, while availability of medical personnel is limited and access thereto is more limited. How are the unpossessed to own objects of beauty or to indulge in their creation or even to enjoy them, without training, in museums or the free galleries of the skies? Friendship, itself the freest of goods, thrives best on leisure, rest, imagination, tolerance, and much else that begins above the poverty-line of life. Variety throughout the whole of experience is another greatly prized human good. Our poorest industrial or agrarian pay denies travel, vacations, variety of goods, new friends, and the thousand and one other things which economic independence affords to relieve the tedium of life. The whole value-situation is complicated in the case of the industrial poor by the insistent presence of highly monotonous work, and by long hours on the farm. Not merely is the attainment of the separate goods—wealth, health, beauty, friendship, variety—lessened by poverty, but also there is left lacking that which underlies all these, the

means to develop personality through the joyous assumption of responsibility in creative processes. Personalities are not handed down, they are grown; and the poor are at a distance from the soil necessary for their nurture.

We put the matter of poverty relatively, as is fit; but the only way it has been kept relative, and may be kept minimal, is by putting on the defensive a doctrine of liberty which would have made, and would yet make, the lot of the poor intolerable.

A touch of irony is added to the deprivation of liberty by the fact that the age-old distinction between material and spiritual goods has actually served largely, whatever may have at various times been the motives of those who capitalized it, to content men with a life that had neither economic nor spiritual plenitude. Spirituality may of course be more than economic activity, but it is certain that it seldom flowers independently of the latter.

Any insistence upon a sharp separation of soul and body, or even of body and mind, will do for the poor to challenge. If a man permits his soul to become his exclusive joy, he will be fortunate if he does not some day wake to find that he has neither soul nor joy.

A life externally meager, internally dull—save to the Walter Mittys!—this is the impoverishment suffered by too many of the industrial children of those democratic pioneers who dreamed their way West on hopes of enlarged opportunities instinct with justice. All this ought to make clear what the eventuation is to be, regardless of the motivation back of it, of the tendency to give up equality as a part of the democratic insistence. To yield equality is to renounce fraternity and liberty at the same fell blow. For the prosperous to insist upon this would be a current version of: If they lack bread, let them live on cake.

Equality as Complementary to Liberty

Liberty and equality have usually in England been considered antithetic; and, since fraternity has rarely been considered at all, the famous trilogy has been easily dismissed as a hybrid abortion. Equality implies the deliberate acceptance of social restraints upon individual expansion. It involves the prevention of sensational extremes of wealth and power by public action for the public good. If liberty means, therefore, that every individual shall be free, according to his opportunities, to indulge without limit his appetite for either, it is clearly incompatible, not only with economic and social, but with civil and political, equality, which also prevent the strong exploiting to the full the advantages of their strength, and, indeed, with any habit of life save that of the Cyclops. But freedom for the pike is death for the minnows, and it is pos-

sible that equality is to be contrasted, not with liberty, but only with a particular interpretation of it.

The test of a principle is that it can be generalized so that the advantages of applying it are not particular, but universal. Since it is impossible for every individual, as for every nation, simultaneously to be stronger than his neighbours, it is a truism that liberty, as distinct from the liberties of special persons and classes, can exist only in so far as it is limited by rules, which secure that freedom for some is not slavery for others. The spiritual energy of human beings, in all the wealth of their infinite diversities, is the end to which external arrangements, whether political or economic, are merely means. Hence institutions which guarantee to men the opportunity of becoming the best of which they are capa-

ble are the supreme political good, and liberty is rightly preferred to equality, when the two are in conflict. The question is whether, in the conditions of modern society, they conflict or not. It is whether the defined and limited freedom, which alone is capable of being generally enjoyed, is most likely to be attained by a community which encourages violent inequalities, or by one which represses them.

Inequality of power is not necessarily inimical to liberty. On the contrary, it is the condition of it. Liberty implies the ability to act, not merely to resist. Neither society as a whole, nor any group within it, can carry out its will except through organs; and, in order that such organs may function with effect, they must be sufficiently differentiated to perform their varying tasks, of which direction is one and execution another. But, while inequality of power is the condition of liberty, since it is the condition of any effective action, it is also a menace to it, for power which is sufficient to use is sufficient to abuse. Hence, in the political sphere, where the danger is familiar, all civilized communities have established safeguards, by which the advantages of differentiation of function, with the varying degrees of power which it involves, may be preserved, and the risk that power may be tyrannical, or perverted to private ends, averted or diminished. They have endeavoured, for example, as in England, to protect civil liberty by requiring that, with certain exceptions, the officers of the State shall be subject to the ordinary tribunals, and political liberty by insisting that those who take decisions on matters affecting the public shall be responsible to an assembly chosen by it. The precautions may be criticized as inadequate, but the need for precautions is not today disputed. It is recognized that political power must rest ultimately on consent, and that its exercise must be limited by rules of law.

The dangers arising from inequalities of economic power have been less commonly recognized. They exist, however, whether recognized or not. For the excess or abuse of power, and its divorce from responsibility, which results in oppression, are not confined to the relations which arise between men as

members of a state. They are not a malady which is peculiar to political systems, as was typhus to slums, and from which other departments of life can be regarded as immune. They are a disease, not of political organization, but of organization. They occur, in the absence of preventive measures, in political associations, because they occur in all forms of association in which large numbers of individuals are massed for collective action. The isolated worker may purchase security against exploitation at the cost of poverty, as the hermit may avoid the corruptions of civilization by forgoing its advantages. But, as soon as he is associated with his fellows in a common undertaking, his duties must be specified and his rights defined; and, in so far as they are not, the undertaking is impeded. The problem of securing a livelihood ceases to be merely economic, and becomes social and political. The struggle with nature continues, but on a different plane. Its efficiency is heightened by co-operation. Its character is complicated by the emergence of the question of the terms on which co-operation shall take place.

In an industrial civilization, when its first phase is over, most economic activity is corporate activity. It is carried on, not by individuals, but by groups, which are endowed by the State with a legal status, and the larger of which, in size, complexity, specialization of functions and unity of control, resemble less the private enterprise of the past than a public department. Since, as far as certain great industries are concerned, employment must be found in the service of these corporations, or not at all, the mass of mankind pass their working lives under the direction of a hierarchy, whose heads define, as they think most profitable, the lines on which the common enterprise is to proceed, and determine, subject to the intervention of the State and voluntary organizations, the economic, and to a considerable, though diminishing, extent, the social environment of their employees. Possessing the reality of power, without the decorative trappings—unless, as in England is often the case, it thinks it worth while to buy them—this business oligarchy is the effective

aristocracy of industrial nations, and the aristocracy of tradition and prestige, when such still exists, carries out its wishes and courts its favours. Since, in such conditions, authority over human beings is exercised, not only through political, but through economic, organs, the problem of liberty is necessarily concerned, not only with political, but also with economic, relations.

It is true, of course, that the problems are different. The abuses of economic are less menacing than those of political power, for their range of operations is narrower and they are more easily corrected without a violent upheaval. But to suppose that they are trivial, or that they are automatically prevented by political democracy, is to be deceived by words. Freedom is always, no doubt, a matter of degree; no man enjoys all the requirements of full personal development, and all men possess some of them. It is not only compatible with conditions in which all men are fellow-servants, but would find in such conditions its most perfect expression. What it excludes is a society where only some are servants, while others are masters.

For, whatever else the idea involves, it implies, at least, that no man shall be amenable to an authority which is arbitrary in its proceedings, exorbitant in its demands, or incapable of being called to account when it abuses its office for personal advantage. In so far as his livelihood is at the mercy of an irresponsible superior, whether political or economic, who can compel his reluctant obedience by *force majeure*, whose actions he is unable to modify or resist, save at the cost of grave personal injury to himself and his dependents, and whose favour he must court, even when he despises it, he may possess a profusion of more tangible blessings, from beer to motor-bicycles, but he can hardly be said to be in possession of freedom. In so far as an economic system grades mankind into groups, of which some can wield, if unconsciously, the force of economic duress for their own profit or convenience, whilst others must submit to it, its effect is that freedom itself is similarly graded. Society is divided, in its economic and social, though not necessarily in its

political, relations, into classes which are ends, and classes which are instruments. Like property, with which in the past it has been closely connected, liberty becomes in such circumstances the privilege of a class, not the possession of a nation.

Political principles resemble military tactics; they are usually designed for a war which is over. Freedom is commonly interpreted in political terms, because it was in the political arena that the most resounding of its recent victories were won. It is regarded as belonging to human beings as citizens, rather than to citizens as human beings; so that it is possible for a nation, the majority of whose members have as little influence on the decisions that determine their economic destinies as on the motions of the planets, to applaud the idea with self-congratulatory gestures of decorous enthusiasm, as though history were of the past, but not of the present. If the attitude of the ages from which it inherits a belief in liberty had been equally ladylike, there would have been, it is probable, little liberty to applaud. For freedom is always relative to power, and the kind of freedom which at any moment it is most urgent to affirm depends on the nature of the power which is prevalent and established. Since political arrangements may be such as to check excesses of power, while economic arrangements permit or encourage them, a society, or a large part of it, may be both politically free and economically the opposite. It may be protected against arbitrary action by the agents of government, and be without the security against economic oppression which corresponds to civil liberty. It may possess the political institutions of an advanced democracy, and lack the will and ability to control the conduct of those powerful in its economic affairs, which is the economic analogy of political freedom.

The extension of liberty from the political sphere, where its battle, in most parts of western Europe, is now, perhaps, won, to those of economic relations, where it is still to win, is evidently among the most urgent tasks of industrial communities, which are at once irritated and paralysed by the failure to effect it.

It is evident also, however, that, in so far as this extension takes place, the traditional antithesis between liberty and equality will no longer be valid. As long as liberty is interpreted as consisting exclusively in security against oppression by the agents of the State, or as a share in its government, it is plausible, perhaps, to dissociate it from equality; for, though experience suggests that, even in this meagre and restricted sense, it is not easily maintained in the presence of extreme disparities of wealth and influence, it is possible for it to be enjoyed, in form at least, by pauper and millionaire. Such disparities, however, though they do not enable one group to become the political master of another, necessarily cause it to exercise a preponderant, and sometimes an overwhelming, influence on the economic life of the rest of the community.

Hence, when liberty is construed realistically, as implying, not merely a minimum of civil and political rights, but securities that the economically weak will not be at the mercy of the economically strong, and that

the control of those aspects of economic life by which all are affected will be amenable, in the last resort, to the will of all, a large measure of equality, so far from being inimical to liberty, is essential to it. In conditions which impose co-operative, rather than merely individual, effort, liberty is, in fact, equality in action, in the sense, not that all men perform identical functions or wield the same degree of power, but that all men are equally protected against the abuse of power, and equally entitled to insist that power shall be used, not for personal ends, but for the general advantage. Civil and political liberty obviously imply, not that all men shall be members of parliament, cabinet ministers, or civil servants, but the absence of such civil and political inequalities as enable one class to impose its will on another by legal coercion. It should be not less obvious that economic liberty implies, not that all men shall initiate, plan, direct, manage, or administer, but the absence of such economic inequalities as can be used as a means of economic constraint.

58 • *Freedom of Conscience and Expression*

Most of us believe that the basic freedom, upon which all other freedoms in a democratic society depend, is the individual's right to hold and to express publicly whatever opinions he thinks are right, no matter how distasteful they may be to other people. We hold this right to be fundamental because men cannot govern themselves unless they can speak their minds, and they can neither develop to their full stature as men nor advance their civilization without the right to inquire, to explore, and to find out for themselves the truth about any and all things. This basic fact was expressed in cogent language by John Stuart Mill more than a century ago, in his famous essay on liberty:

If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. Were an opinion a personal possession of no value except to the owner; if to be obstructed

[From the President's Committee on Civil Rights, *To Secure These Rights*, Simon and Schuster, 1947, pp. 47-53. Reprinted by permission of Simon and Schuster.]

in the enjoyment of it were simply a private matter, it would make some difference whether the injury was inflicted only on a few persons or on many. But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.*

It is not so clear today as it was in Mill's time that any and all opinions should be treated with such respect. Confusion and fear of communist and fascist ideologies and organizations operating on an international stage and backed by powerful political states have led some citizens to take the view that certain opinions are too dangerous to be heard. Whatever we may think about the threat to the basic freedom of conscience and expression posed by the emergence of alien ideologies and new techniques of propaganda and thought control, it is clear that we must deal with the situation adequately if we are to safeguard our democratic way of life. Perhaps the most thoroughgoing and certainly the most impartial study of freedom in an "age of anxiety" is the one conducted by the President's Committee on Civil Rights, chaired by Charles E. Wilson and listing as its members some of our most distinguished citizens. This report, issued in 1947, sets forth our heritage of liberty and equality, explores the present condition of civil rights in our country and the government's responsibility for securing them, and then proposes a program of action. From this report the following selection on freedom of opinion and expression was taken.

This right is an expression of confidence in the ability of freemen to learn the truth through the unhampered interplay of competing ideas. Where the right is generally exercised, the public benefits from the selective process of winnowing truth from falsehood, desirable ideas from evil ones. If the people are to govern themselves their only hope of doing so wisely lies in the collective wisdom derived from the fullest possible information, and in the fair presentation of differing opinions. The right is also necessary to permit each man to find his way to the religious and political beliefs which suit his private needs.

This Committee has made no extensive study of our record under the great freedoms

which comprise this right: religion, speech, press, and assembly. To have done so would have meant making this vast field the dominant part of our inquiry. We were not prepared to do this, partly because it has been and is being well studied by others. What finally determined us was the conviction that this right is relatively secure. Americans worship as they choose. Our press is freer from government restraints than any the world has seen. Our citizens are normally free to exercise their right to speak without fear of retribution, and to assemble for unlimited public discussions. There still are, however, communities in which sporadic interferences with the rights of unpopular religious, political,

* John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, Macmillan, 1926, pp. 20-21.

and economic groups take place. The steady flow of federal court cases in recent years involving groups like the Jehovah's Witnesses proves that.

At the present time, in our opinion, the most immediate threat to the right to freedom of opinion and expression is indirect. It comes from efforts to deal with those few people in our midst who would destroy democracy. There are two groups whose refusal to accept and abide by the democratic process is all too clear. The first are the Communists whose counterparts in many countries have proved, by their treatment of those with whom they disagree, that their ideology does not include a belief in universal civil rights. The second are the native Fascists. Their statements and their actions—as well as those of their foreign counterparts—prove them to be equally hostile to the American heritage of freedom and equality.

It is natural and proper for good citizens to worry about the activities of these groups. Every member of this Committee shares that concern. Communists and Fascists may assert different objectives. This does not obscure the identity of the means which both are willing to use to further themselves. Both often use the words and symbols of democracy to mask their totalitarian tactics. But their concern for civil rights is always limited to themselves. Both are willing to lie about their political views when it is convenient. They feel no obligation to come before the public openly and say who they are and what they really want.

This Committee unqualifiedly opposes any attempt to impose *special* limitations on the rights of these people to speak and assemble. Our national past offers us two great touchstones to resolve the dilemma of maintaining the right to free expression and yet protecting our democracy against its enemies. One was offered by Jefferson in his first inaugural address: "If there be any among us who wish to dissolve the Union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it." The second is the doctrine

of "clear and present danger." This was laid down as a working principle by the Supreme Court in 1919 in *Schenck v. United States* in an opinion written by Justice Holmes. It says that no limitation of freedom of expression shall be made unless "the words are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent." The next year in a dissenting opinion in *Schaefer v. United States* Justice Brandeis added this invaluable word of advice about the application of the doctrine: "Like many other rules for human conduct, it can be applied correctly only by the exercise of good judgment, and in the exercise of good judgment, calmness is, in time of deep feeling and on subjects which excite passion, as essential as fearlessness and honesty."

It is our feeling that the present threat to freedom of opinion grows out of the failure of some private and public persons to apply these standards. Specifically, public excitement about "Communists" has gone far beyond the dictates of the "good judgment" and "calmness" of which Holmes and Brandeis spoke. A state of near-hysteria now threatens to inhibit the freedom of genuine democrats.

At the same time we are afraid that the "reason" upon which Jefferson relied to combat error is hampered by the successful effort of some totalitarians to conceal their true nature. To expect people to reject totalitarians, when we do not provide mechanisms to guarantee that essential information is available, is foolhardy. These two concerns go together. If we fall back upon hysteria and repression as our weapons against totalitarians, we will defeat ourselves. Communists want nothing more than to be lumped with freedom-loving non-Communists. This simply makes it easier for them to conceal their true nature and to allege that the term "Communist" is "meaningless." Irresponsible opportunists who make it a practice to attack every person or group with whom they disagree as "Communists" have thereby actually aided their supposed "enemies." At the same time we cannot let these abuses deter us from the legitimate ex-

posing of real Communists and real Fascists. Moreover, the same zeal must be shown in defending our democracy against one group as against the other.

CIVIL SERVANTS

Efforts to protect the government against disloyal employees may lead to dangerous "Red hunting." We firmly believe that the government has the obligation to have in its employ only citizens of unquestioned loyalty. We are, moreover, aware of the disclosures made in the Canadian espionage trials which reveal concerted attempts by Communists to procure secret government information either directly or through dupes. We know that Communists feel no obligation to identify themselves as members of their party, and have completely divided loyalties, which make them dangerous in posts of government responsibility. We are further aware that there are certain governmental agencies which because of the confidential and highly secret character of their work must have absolute assurance of the complete loyalty of all their employees.

All of these factors make it difficult to maintain effective security. Several statutes now on the books make it possible to prosecute any federal employee who reveals restricted information. Those dissatisfied with these safeguards argue that the concealment by Communists and other subversives of their affiliations makes it impossible to weed them out until they have done serious damage. Therefore they contend, it is necessary to have the loyalty of all federal employees checked by security police agencies. This Committee recognizes the need for some such protective measures. Yet our whole civil liberties history provides us with a clear warning against the possible misuse of loyalty checks to inhibit freedom of opinion and expression.

There are two possible dangers. In the first place, the standards by which the loyalty of an individual or an organization is to be determined may not be clearly defined. This is particularly true of any standard which permits condemnation of persons or groups be-

cause of "association." The character, the policies and the leadership of many organizations change. Individuals, too, change their opinions. The greatest care must be taken to avoid the misinterpretation of affiliation. Individuals may be members of suspect organizations out of ignorance. Before such affiliations may even be considered as relevant, the motive of the individual should be clearly established. The determination of the suspect character of organizations is complex and must be handled with the greatest care. For the individual the ultimate test must always be his own trustworthiness. Affiliation with a dubious organization is, by itself, not necessarily proof of untrustworthiness.

A second danger is that the procedure by which the loyalty of accused federal employees is determined may not accord with our traditions of due process of law. An employee whose loyalty is questioned is not charged with a crime. But loss of job and inability to obtain another one is a severe punishment to impose on any man. Accordingly, provision should be made for such traditional procedural safeguards as the right to a bill of particular accusations, the right to subpoena witnesses and documents where genuine security considerations permit, the right to be represented by counsel, the right to a stenographic report of proceedings, the right to a written decision, and the right of appeal.

More than the civil rights of our two million federal workers—important as they are—is involved here. All Americans are bound to be affected by what is done. The federal government must maintain a loyalty program which adequately protects the civil rights of its employees. Otherwise private employers and state and local governments may not protect the rights of *their* personnel, and in fact they may actually be encouraged to infringe these rights. It is a severe punishment to be discharged from the government for disloyalty, as the Supreme Court pointed out in 1946 in *United States v. Lovett*. Our system of democratic justice has proved again and again its ability to protect us in peace and in war. To make a conspicuous departure from it against government workers would surely

weaken the safeguards of the right of all citizens to speak freely and to organize in furtherance of their opinions. Here as elsewhere, the federal government must set an example for the rest of the country by being uncommonly scrupulous in its respect for the civil rights of all citizens.

ENEMIES OF DEMOCRACY

As we have said, one of the things which totalitarians of both left and right have in common is a reluctance to come before the people honestly and say who they are, what they work for and who supports them. Those persons in our own country who try to stir up religious and racial hatreds are no exception. They understand that the vicious doctrines which they advocate have been morally outlawed in America for more than a century and a half. This Committee is as eager to guarantee their civil rights as those of the people they attack. But we do not believe in a definition of civil rights which includes freedom to avoid all responsibility for one's opinions. This would be an unwise and disastrous weakening of the democratic process. If these people wish to influence the public in our national forum of opinion they should be free to do so, regardless of how distasteful their views are to us. But the public must be able to evaluate these views. Exactly how much anonymous, hate-mongering or other subversive literature there is we do not know. The amount of such matter fluctuates greatly from time to time. At the present, according to several witnesses who appeared before the Committee, many of those who spread racial and religious prejudices have "gone underground." As recently as 1940, however, a study by the staff of the Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures revealed that one-third of the election propaganda in the campaign of that year was completely anonymous and that one-half was partially and inadequately identified as to source and sponsorship. Moreover, the Committee reported that the anonymous material included "the most virulent, dishonest and defamatory propaganda." Congress has already taken the first

step to remedy this inadequacy by amending the election laws to forbid the distribution of anonymous campaign literature.

The principle of disclosure is, we believe, the appropriate way to deal with those who would subvert our democracy by revolution or by encouraging disunity and destroying the civil rights of some groups. We have considered and rejected proposals which have been made to us for censoring or prohibiting material which defames religious or racial minority groups. Our purpose is not to constrict anyone's freedom to speak; it is rather to enable the people better to judge the true motives of those who try to sway them.

Congress has already made use of the principle of disclosure in both the economic and political spheres. The Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission and the Pure Foods and Drug Administration make available to the public information about sponsors of economic wares. In the political realm, the Federal Communications Commission, the Post Office Department, the Clerk of the House of Representatives, and the Secretary of the Senate—all of these under various statutes—are required to collect information about those who attempt to influence public opinion. Thousands of statements disclosing the ownership and control of newspapers using the second-class mailing privilege are filed annually with the Post Office Department. Hundreds of statements disclosing the ownership and control of radio stations are filed with the Federal Communications Commission. Hundreds of lobbyists are now required to disclose their efforts to influence Congress under the Congressional Reorganization Act. In 1938, Congress found it necessary to pass the Foreign Agents Registration Act which forced certain citizens and aliens alike to register with the Department of Justice the facts about their sponsorship and activities. The effectiveness of these efforts has varied. We believe, however, that they have been sufficiently successful to warrant their further extension to all of those who attempt to influence public opinion.

The ultimate responsibility for countering

totalitarians of all kinds rests, as always, with the mass of good, democratic Americans, their organizations and their leaders. The federal government must set an example of careful adherence to the highest standards in guaranteeing freedom of opinion and expres-

sion to its employees. Beyond that it ought to provide a source of reference where private citizens and groups may find accurate information about the activities, sponsorship, and background of those who are active in the market place of public opinion.

SUMMARY

Education is, ultimately, the process by which society maintains and reproduces itself. Schooling, of course, is not the whole of education. But in every society in which the school has existed at all, its primary function has been to inculcate in the young the motives, attitudes, and beliefs, the knowledges and the skills, the ways of thinking, feeling, and acting, that are desired by society. At bottom, the educator is a mediator between the child and his culture. Hence the teacher derives his authority to educate in one way rather than another from the basic moral and intellectual commitments of the people served by the school.

Spokesmen for the educational profession have repeatedly stated that public education in the United States is, and must be, grounded in the democratic tradition. Despite some opposition to, and some violation of, the spirit and tenets of democracy in American society, there is evidence that the democratic ethic does embody the social faith of the nation as a whole. But there is also clear evidence that at the present time the American people are divided and confused by two conflicting interpretations of democracy in the modern world. There has always been within the democratic tradition a conflict between those who have regarded government simply as an impartial arbiter in a competitive society and those who have felt that it is the duty of government to promote the welfare of the common man. In the nineteenth century, with the development of the social sciences and of large corporate enterprise, two distinct interpretations of democracy have emerged¹ from these two points of view. As we have seen, these differing interpretations involve, not only different philosophies of government, but also different conceptions of the nature of man and of society. Moreover, they embody different definitions of liberty, equality, rights, and individualism. It is true, and it is important, that there are common loyalties and beliefs at the heart of both of these social theories. Both wings of democracy, for example, share the emphasis upon representative government, the dignity and value of the individual, the maintenance of the civil liberties, and the use of reason in resolution of social differences and conflicts. We are dealing here with different interpretations of a common tradition, not with utterly different social philosophies. Nevertheless, the cleavage is very real and deep.

The significance of this cleavage in the democratic tradition—for the nation and for education—will be explored in some detail in Chapters 10 and 11. But the assertion that public education in the United States is grounded in the democratic ethic means, if it means anything, that the basic purpose of the public school is the development, through the use of democratic methods, of persons committed to the spirit and tenets

of democracy. Yet, so long as the cleavage exists it is obvious that the school cannot inculcate either of these two points of view. It can, however, emphasize the common elements which cut beneath the conflict, and it can help its pupils to understand the issues involved in these different interpretations; but clarification for the pupil depends upon understanding on the part of the teacher.

For this reason, attaining a clear understanding of the democratic tradition, including the conflicts and contradictions within it, is an essential part of the education of a teacher. The readings in this chapter have been chosen to assist in the development of such understanding. But it must be remembered that it is the analysis of these selections, not their conclusions, that is important. There are, as we have pointed out, significant common values and meanings at the roots of the conflicting interpretations of the democratic tradition. But, to a considerable extent, these controversies about the meaning of democracy penetrate to the level of the basic premises and values on which judgment and choice are predicated. Hence, the conflict can be resolved without coercion (if indeed, it can be resolved) only through prolonged public discussion and action which culminates in a common interpretation of democracy satisfactory to all or nearly all of the American people.

In the meantime, each of you may make your own "summary" of the conclusions you have reached after studying this chapter. In working out this summary it would be well to keep in mind the seven questions which were raised near the end of the introduction to the chapter.

We have noted that the educational profession in the United States has sought to base public education on the democratic tradition. There are those, however, who feel that democracy is not an adequate foundation for education. Only a great religious faith, they insist, has the depth, the power, and the certainty necessary to a secure foundation for the education of children and youth. In the next chapter (Chap. 9) we will turn to an examination of this issue. After that, in Chapters 10 and 11, we will return to a study of the basic value conflicts in our society and their significance for the nation and for public education.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. What are the principal issues separating the two major interpretations of democracy which are competing for the support of the American people? What areas of common agreement are there between these two views? How do these positions differ in regard to (a) the meaning of freedom, (b) the meaning of equality, (c) the relationship between liberty and equality, and (d) conception of human motivation?

2. Which of the following is the freer: a physician, a teacher in a classroom, a pioneer, a savage, a new-born baby? What definition of freedom are you using in making your judgment? Why?

3. It is sometimes asserted that freedom and equality are contradictory conceptions—the more freedom, the less equality and vice versa. What is the assumption about the meaning of freedom in this assertion? About the meaning of equality?

4. What is the conception of freedom used in the theory of progressive education? Is it the same as that used in the *laissez-faire* conception of democracy?

5. A fifth-grade class was discussing the football game that the town's high school was to play the next day. When the supervisor asked the teacher why her class discussed anything as trivial as football, the teacher replied: "But that's what they wanted to talk about today." From her reply can you infer anything about her conception of democracy?

6. A group of individuals in the city wish to establish a program of scholarships for worthy students. The group prescribes that no scholarships shall be given to members of certain minorities. The faculty refuses to participate in the plan on the grounds that the principle of equality is being violated, and that to participate would thus be unethical. Is the faculty correct? What line of reasoning leads you to this conclusion?

1. A general reference book on the American tradition to which you may go for more extensive discussions of the meanings which our basic social ideals have taken on over the years is Vernon Lee Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought*. This work traces our intellectual tradition from colonial times down to the twentieth century. A shorter work of similar import is Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought*. Morris R. Cohen's *American Thought: A Critical Sketch* is one of the best of the critical surveys of our intellectual history. T. V. Smith and Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Democratic Way of Life*, offers an excellent contemporary interpretation of democracy from the point of view of the "new liberalism." *The Democratic Way of Life* is a Mentor book, available in book stores and on newsstands for 35 cents.

2. George S. Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, and Carl L. Becker, *Modern Democracy*, explore, in somewhat different ways, the impact of technological and social change on democratic theory and practice. Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *America in Midpassage* (especially pp. 501-507, 536-576, 920-949) indicates clearly the ideological cleavages in American political and social theory.

3. There are a number of good discussions of the meaning of liberty. Perhaps the best single reference is Dorothy Fosdick's *What Is Liberty?* Herbert Hoover, *The Challenge to Liberty*, and Ogden Mills, *Liberalism Fights On*, define liberty from a "classical liberal" point of view. Samuel Everett, *Democracy Faces the Future* (pp. 157-170), George Soule, *The Future of Liberty* (pp. 1-57), and Alexander Meiklejohn, *What Does America Mean?* (pp. 87-164), interpret liberty from the standpoint of the "new liberalism." Everett's book has an excellent schematic statement of the differences between these two points of view, but his discussion is more dated, and perhaps more partisan, than Meiklejohn's.

4. The literature on equality is not as extensive as that on liberty. But both T. V. Smith, *The Democratic Philosophy of Equality* (pp. 250-326), and R. H. Tawney, *Equality* (pp. 12-148), are pertinent and illuminating contemporary interpretations of the meaning of equality. Matthew Arnold's *Essay on Equality*, written in the middle of the last century, is still the best defense of the ideal of equality known to the editors of this book. *Are Men Equal?* by Henry Alonzo Myers discusses the validity of the concept of equality and traces the role of this concept in American history.

5. For the relationship between liberty and equality see William F. Russell, *Liberty vs. Equality* (pp. 3-94), and R. H. Tawney, *Equality* (pp. 119-239). These books take

opposite points of view: Tawney contends that liberty and equality are complementary, whereas Russell argues that they are contradictory. Unlike most writers who assert that liberty and equality are contradictory, however, Russell holds that both ideals, in moderation, are valid expressions of the democratic tradition.

6. Herbert Hoover's *American Individualism* and John Dewey's *Individualism: Old and New* explore—again from different points of view—the place of individualism in a democratic society. Herbert Hoover defends, with some modification, the traditional conception of individualism, whereas John Dewey argues that changing conditions require a reinterpretation of the valid elements of individualism.

7. The basic argument for freedom of thought and speech will be found in John Stuart Mill's great essay *On Liberty*. Henry Steele Commager, *Freedom, Loyalty, Dissent* contains a good contemporary statement on the same subject which takes account of the problems created by the communist conspiracy and by those who would destroy civil liberties under the guise of, or in the course of, fighting against communism.

8. Many books have been written on the relationship of the school to the democratic tradition. Only a few of these can be suggested here. George Counts's little book *Education and the Promise of America* is both interesting and easy to read. Two statements by the Educational Policies Commission—*The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy* and *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy*—deal with the purposes of education in a democratic society. Both George Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, and Harold Rugg and William Withers, *Social Foundations of Education*, have excellent sections on education in a modern democratic society. Finally, the yearbooks of the John Dewey Society contain ably written and detailed discussions of many different aspects of the relationship between education and democracy.

Church, State, and School



Religion has always played a significant role in society. Although the extent of its influence has varied from one society to another and from age to age, it has been a powerful element of every cultural system. At times religion has permeated and governed every significant aspect of life. In the Middle Ages, for example, it was the chief influence regulating the family, politics and economics, the schools, the arts, and the pursuit of knowledge. It gave purpose to the life of the individual, rationalized his death, and depicted his ultimate destiny. With the secularization of society that accompanied the decline of medieval culture, the regulative influence of religion slowly receded. Finally, under Protestantism, the political and economic aspects of society became virtually free of church control. Under the name of science, economic and political theories arose that entirely disregarded religious and moral considerations. "Pure" economics and "pure" politics, as subjects of study and research, claimed the attention of scholars in Western society, where the Christian religion once permeated the entire cultural system. As the power of religion waned in other parts of society, the schools, too, slowly came under secular influences. But education did not become fully secularized until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

SECULAR VS. RELIGIOUS CONTROL

The struggle to free the schools of religious control was a long and bitter one, and in some countries the goal was never reached. It is not possible in this book to trace the course of the struggle, but some reference to it is necessary if we are to understand the issue over religion in the schools as it appears to the public and to the teaching profession in the United States today.

Let us suppose that in order to educate the immature one must know the purpose of man on earth, and that in order to know that purpose one must be informed of it by man's Creator. If we assume that the church is the agency through which the Supreme Being reveals such purpose, it then follows that education should be conducted by the

church. This is the course of reasoning by which the Catholic church asserts its right to control the school. The Protestant doctrine, with its emphasis upon the individual and his pursuit of salvation in the light of his own understanding of the scriptures, casts doubt upon the Catholic argument. Protestantism did, of course, leave a place for church influence in the schools, for the individual had now to be taught the scriptures by those trained in the ways of religion. But it was no longer logically necessary for the church to permeate the entire educational program and to exercise complete control over it.

Moreover, the rise of nation-states created a civil authority of extensive geographic scope which took upon itself the task of maintaining civic and economic order within its borders and protecting itself from outside attack. This civil authority, having its own national interests to protect, came in time to challenge the right of any and all religious groups to control the schools within its borders. Stimulated partly by the need to instill patriotism and partly by a desire to provide education for everyone, Germany and France, by the latter part of the eighteenth century, were moving in the direction of state control of the educational system. At this time, in the Catholic countries—Italy, Spain, and Portugal—the schools remained in the hands of the church, and in Protestant England the state was content with religious schools under Protestant jurisdiction. During this period the people of the United States were struggling with the problems of self-government under a new regime and for the moment left the problems of education largely to the churches.

The movement toward secular control of education continued to gain strength until, by the middle of the nineteenth century, all the leading nations of Europe had established state systems of education with varying degrees of centralization. The relation of religion to these state systems varied from country to country, and from time to time within the same country. By and large, the predominantly Catholic countries, such as Spain and Portugal, continued to have, and still have, a sectarian system of schools. Other European countries, however, considerably reduced the role of religion in public education, although they permitted the state churches or authorized religions to exercise a measure of influence in the state schools. But none attained the degree of secularization reached in the United States.

SECULARIZATION IN AMERICA

The secularization of the public schools in the United States is the result of unusual circumstances. A great number of the colonists came to America to escape religious persecution in Europe and to find a place where they could worship as they pleased. As a result, the new country came to be settled by people of a great variety of religious faith, each recognizing the principle of religious freedom, even though it often indulged in the persecution of heretics itself. Well into the 1800's, many of these sects operated schools under their own auspices—largely upon the premise that religious liberty guaranteed each denomination the right to provide its own schools. As the spirit of democracy grew after the Revolution and the founding of the new nation, it became clear that education

was essential for an intelligent citizenry and that support and control of schools was a proper activity of a duly constituted government. The schools thus gained public support, and their aims, which had been largely religious during the colonial period, gradually became civic.

It was only to be expected that the churches and the states would clash sooner or later over the control of the schools. There was no established church or official religion such as existed in some of the European nations. The founders of the new nation insisted upon religious freedom, an idea which entailed the separation of church and state and which was guaranteed in the First Amendment to the Constitution when it declared that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The use of public funds to support denominational schools in time came to be opposed on principle. One of the leaders in the struggle for nonsectarian schools, Horace Mann, of Massachusetts, warned against the teaching of creeds and dogmas and insisted that such a course could lead only to the destruction of the public schools. Why should a citizen be required to pay taxes to support the teaching of religious creeds and dogmas in which he did not believe?

The case for nonsectarian schools was further strengthened by the evolution of compulsory school attendance, which began in the lower grades and was finally extended to the high school. Compulsory attendance would probably have come in time, as it did in almost every nation, but it was hastened in the United States by increases in immigration. The children of the newcomers needed to be socialized in the ways of the new country, to learn its laws and traditions and the duties of its citizens. The school was the logical institution to perform this function. If the school was to perform this function adequately, of course, all the children must be in attendance. Hence the principle of compulsory attendance was reinforced by the need for social cohesion in the new nation. Since there was a great variety of religious beliefs, it was obviously impractical for the public schools to adopt a specific denomination for instructional purposes. Denominationalism would have been impossible even if it had not been opposed on the principle of separation of church and state. To have set up separate schools for each denomination would have divided the schools among a considerable number of religious sects and would probably have wrecked the entire system. In the absence of denominational schools at public expense, compulsory attendance was practicable only for secular schools, for it would not have been possible on either theoretical or practical grounds to require children to attend schools in which a religion different from their own was imposed upon them. In effect this would have involved using an arm of the state to force a religion upon them. Therefore, compulsory attendance served to strengthen the movement for free, nonsectarian public schools. By the 1860's, the principle of nonsectarian education had been established throughout the country.

Despite the fact that the right of any denomination to establish its own schools without public support was granted and guaranteed by the principle of separation of church and state, some citizens and religious leaders have never been reconciled. In every generation there has been agitation for religious instruction in the public schools or for

state support of religious schools. In the last two decades the struggle has been renewed by both Protestants and Catholics, and today the sectarian question is one of the crucial issues facing the public and the teaching profession alike.

THE ISSUES TODAY

There are now more than 250 religious sects in the nation. These are likely to be a part of the culture for as far into the future as one can see. As long as there are religious faiths and as long as the principle of separation of church and state is maintained, the issue is likely to exist. At times it will flare up and generate social tensions and conflicts, as it is doing today. At other times it will lie dormant for decades, as it has done for the better part of the last hundred years. In either event, the teacher ought to be informed on the issue. He should understand what the constitution says and what the courts have ruled, and he should know the arguments of the contending sides. He should be able to analyze these arguments in the light of historical and social facts and in the light of the traditions of the nation. He should be able also to evaluate the contending positions in terms of the social consequences to which each one leads.

Questions about religion and the public schools are apt to arise in any community. Since it is the teacher's duty to share the defense of his fellow teachers and the public schools, he must understand the issues that are likely to arise. Much of the information he will need can be gained from exploration of the following questions:

1. What is the present status of the public schools with regard to their relation to religion as indicated in legislative enactments and court decisions?
2. Should religion or theological ideas be a fundamental ingredient of education?
3. Should religion be taught in the public schools, or is religious instruction the obligation of the home and the church?
4. Should the state support parochial and private schools as well as the public school?

The selections that follow have been divided into four groups—the first stating the issues and sketching in the historical and legal background out of which they arise, the other three presenting conflicting points of view on these issues. In the first group, comprising Selections 59 and 60, Kilpatrick undertakes to outline, as objectively as possible, the cardinal points on which the American people are now most sharply divided with respect to the relationship among the church, the state, and the school on religion and education. In Selection 60, Siegel states fairly, although not without revealing his own view, the historical and legal matrix of the debate over the issues outlined by Kilpatrick.

The second group is primarily concerned with the moral and philosophical bases of the educational program. In Selection 61 Sheed, a Catholic, and Nash, a Protestant, argue that the educational program of the school must be anchored firmly in the tenets of a great religious faith. From the opposite point of view, Stanley, in Selection 62,

contends that the diversity of religious beliefs and the tenacious character of religious convictions would cause any attempt to ground American public education in religious doctrines to arouse bitter and unyielding conflicts which would inevitably split the American people.

The third group, containing Selections 63, 64, and 65, debates the question as to whether or not religion should be taught in the public schools. Here the report of the Committee on Religion and Education, of the American Council on Education, asserts that, since religion is a significant aspect of American culture, it must be taught in the public schools on the same basis as any other subject. In reply, Smith urges that the sharp differences in religious beliefs found among the American people makes it impossible for the school to teach about religion on a nonsectarian basis. In the final selection in this group, Adler takes the position that religious education is properly the function of the church.

The fourth group of selections, 66 and 67, raises the question of state support for parochial and private schools. On this question, Healy contends that a democratic state should respect the diverse views of its citizens and support the type of education desired by different parents for their children. On the other side of the question, Norton replies that state support for parochial schools not only violates our traditional doctrine of the separation of church and state but would also prove highly undesirable from the standpoint of both education and religion.

59 • *Religion in Education: the Issues*

In order to understand the struggle to work out some cooperative arrangement between the church and the state in the task of education, it is important to know precisely what the issues are. From a legal standpoint, these issues center in the interpretation of the federal Constitution, in the question of whether or not the First Amendment was intended to prevent, or in fact does prevent, state support of religious instruction. From a political and social standpoint, the issues revolve around such questions as whether or not state support of religious instruction will lead to religious segmentation of society, to religious political parties and blocs. Would religious instruction in the public school lead to more or to less public dissension about economic and social problems? From an educational standpoint, the issues involve such questions as whether or not moral character can be developed in the schools without the teaching of religion, and whether or not state support of religious instruction may not in time destroy the public schools altogether and create in their place two or more systems of religious schools. In the following passage, William H. Kilpatrick, a noted educational philosopher, states in succinct and cogent form some of the more significant issues.

We are now ready to present a list of the issues which seem to be most significantly involved in the problem of religion in education. The chief interest is of course the disputed area of religion in the public school. It appears wise to present the issues in connection with certain questions which lead naturally to the issues.

Question 1: Is religion to be given an essential place in education? The answer to this question raises acutely the problem of what meaning to give to the terms *religion* and *teaching* as discussed above.

* * *

Issue 1: What does religion mean? What differing kinds of teaching of religion do the several meanings of religion respectively favor? What shall be done about it all?

The next question splits into two according as we, first, ignore (for the sake of this discussion) the legal possibility that the Supreme Court has settled the question and, second, accept that the McCollum decision rules out from the public school all teaching of religion.

Question 2: Disregarding the legal aspect, is it *otherwise right* for the public school to teach religion as such and (a) require all to take it or (b) permit non-conforming parents to have their children excused or (c) apportion school funds to any religious group wishing to set up its own school?

* * *

Issue 2: Does, or does not, the spirit of democracy require that the public school avoid acts which formally separate the pupils of one religious group from the rest? . . .

Issue 3: Do we wish the segmentation of our population by religion, as in Quebec? and with probable resulting political parties or

blocs as in Belgium and the Netherlands? . . .

Issue 4: If the school is to inculcate nothing of religion, does this forbid such practices as Bible reading (as worship), the Lord's prayer, and the singing of Christian Christmas carols?

Issue 5: Can the school practice any of these Christian religious observances without improperly disregarding the rights and feelings of all non-Christians thereby concerned? . . .

Question 3: Supposing that the McCollum decision does forbid any public school support of religion in guise, form, or degree, what shall the opponents of the decision do? This question leads directly to a further issue:

Issue 6: Shall effort be made to amend the Constitution so as to permit the appropriation of public money for teaching religion? . . .

Question 4: How is character built? How shall those character traits be taught that are required for good individual and group living?

This question, understood in the light of the discussion of the terms religion, secularism, spiritual, and teaching, leads at once to . . . further issues:

Issue 7: Is supernatural religion necessary to the effective teaching of the character traits required for good individual and social living?

Issue 8: Is the public school guilty of attack on religion if it acts on the basis of the answer *no* to Issue 7? . . .

Issue 9: Is higher education justified in considering whether religion is not now properly in process of remaking in the light of increasing knowledge?

Issue 10: Is the public school justified in teaching, on its merits, a conception of morality and spirituality which follows from Issue 9?

[From William H. Kilpatrick, "Religion in Education: The Issues," *Progressive Education*, 26 (Feb. 1949): 98-102. Reprinted by permission of the authors and *Progressive Education*.]

Issue 11: Are the students in high school and college to be encouraged to criticize in class the various systems of religion with their

consequent effects on civilization in order to find out what they should themselves believe?

60 • The Historical and Legal Background

In the introduction to the present chapter it was pointed out that the struggle to free the schools of sectarian control has been a long and bitter one. The selection that follows discusses the historical roots of the struggle and summarizes the outcome in five propositions which constitute the basic principles upon which the public school system is founded. Then the author, R. Lawrence Siegel, a prominent lawyer who has taken an active part in legal cases involving church and school, goes on to present two fundamental decisions of the United States Supreme Court regarding religion in the public schools. He cites the famous passage from the *Everson* case in which the Court lays down in unmistakable language the principle of separation of church and state. Despite this decision, various religious groups continue their efforts to have religion taught in the schools and to obtain public funds for religious instruction.

The American doctrine of separation of church and state has been increasingly subject to attack in recent years, particularly in the field of public education. The assault goes beyond considering merely the interpretation and application of this doctrine. Its very existence and reality as an American principle is disputed by a considerable number of sincere and earnest persons, who regard it as the shibboleth of doctrinaire secularism, and deny that it is descriptive of the American tradition and ideal in church-state relations.

Conflicting views on the doctrine of separation have their main point of collision in the public school system. In this area of church and state relations, there are two lines of attack upon the principle of separation. One is the attempt to introduce religious indoctrination and observances into the public schools. The most common instance thereof is the system of released time religious instruction. The second is the effort to secure public funds and other assistance with which to aid sectarian institutions and interests. Familiar examples are the furnishing of free textbooks and transportation to private parochial school pupils.

Until a few decades ago, it was generally assumed that both the secular character of the public schools and the non-support of religion by the government were assured under the traditional doctrine of separation. But in late years these assumptions have been challenged, with some success, in many forums, including the courts and Congress. As a consequence, the use of governmental machinery and aus-

tration and observances into the public schools. The most common instance thereof is the system of released time religious instruction. The second is the effort to secure public funds and other assistance with which to aid sectarian institutions and interests. Familiar examples are the furnishing of free textbooks and transportation to private parochial school pupils.

[From R. Lawrence Siegel, "Church-State Separation and Public Schools," *Progressive Education*, 26 (Feb. 1949): 103-111. Reprinted by permission of the authors and *Progressive Education*.]

pices to aid sectarian groups in providing sectarian religious instruction and the use of government funds to assist religious interests are now basic issues in constitutional law and in our daily lives.

* * *

In the past one hundred thirty years or so, the states have evolved their own solutions of the age-old question whether government, the family, or the church shall have control of the education of the child. These solutions in broad outline provide:

1. that the state shall have prescribed standards for education and make adherence to them compulsory;

2. that to promote the ideal of universal education, the state shall provide free, public tax-supported schools;

3. that the basic principle of separation of church and state requires that religious indoctrination be excluded from these schools;

4. that the parents shall retain full freedom to use the public schools for the education of their children, or if they choose, to educate them instead in private schools at their own expense, provided these schools conform to the standards prescribed by the states;

5. that education of all children up to a stated age shall be compulsory either in a public or private school.

* * *

The majority of our early settlers came from lands where church and state were not separated but linked or closely interrelated. Many had themselves suffered, or were descended from those who had suffered, for their religious beliefs. A large proportion came here from Europe to escape the bondage of laws which compelled them to support and attend government favored churches. They were mostly persons of intense religious convictions. Hence, they settled generally as religious communities. Unfortunately, although seeking religious freedom for themselves, the settlers did not wish to extend it, and were quick to deny it, to those with differing religious beliefs. The practices of the

old world, in religion, were transplanted and began to thrive in the soil of this country. There developed therefore within some colonies a union of church and state, in some others an almost equally close interlocking relationship. Only three colonies never had any form of established church. Generally speaking, in colonial America it was the accepted duty of the state to foster not only religion in general, but a particular form of Christian faith. Furthermore, the acceptance of this responsibility usually involved the suppression, if not always of dissenting opinions, at least of public worship other than that established by law. Dissenters were compelled to pay tithes and taxes to support government-sponsored churches.

During the pre-Revolutionary period, the colonists repeated many of the religious quarrels of the old world, with like results in persecution, suffering, discrimination, and civic disunity. These quarrels led to a growing desire for separation of church and state, which feeling proliferated widely and became ever more apparent. By the time of the War for Independence, the desire for religious freedom was intense and rather common. Dissenting groups had been discriminated against, and their discontent was part of the internal upheaval that accompanied the War.

Battles for religious liberty broke out in Virginia and other states. These contests were waged on two fronts: 1) to end the institution of an established church; 2) to transfer religious belief and religious activities from the area of public concern to one of exclusively private interest. The Virginia Declaration of Rights, adopted in 1776, just a few days before the Continental Declaration of Independence, expressed an idea which was then current in all the colonies. It declared that all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience. This Declaration has been hailed as the first official legislative pronouncement that freedom of conscience and religion are inherent rights of the individual. After the Declaration of Independence, the southern, middle and some of the New England col-

onies moved rapidly to incorporate within their new State Constitutions, prohibitions against an established church and also to assure their citizens freedom of worship and of religious belief.

* * *

The First Amendment provides, in its relevant part, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Of late, the meaning and intent of this amendment have become the subject of much learned debate. The controversy is confined to the meaning and intent of the "establishment of religion" clause. The crux of the debate lies in the question whether it does or does not prohibit equal government assistance to all religions or sects. It is agreed that the clause prohibits an established national or state church. Disagreement lodges in the question whether it enjoins impartial government aid to religion and in the impact of the answer thereto upon church-state relations in America, especially in regard to public education.

* * *

On March 8, 1948, the United States Supreme Court handed down its land-mark decision in the *McCullum* case. The court ruled, by 8-1 vote, that the Champaign system of released time religious instruction, conducted within the public school buildings under public school auspices, was a violation of the constitutional principle of separation of church and state, as declared in the First Amendment and made applicable to the states by the Fourteenth. It therefore held that the Illinois court below had erred in refusing relief to the complainant, a parent and taxpayer, against the continued use of school buildings for such religious instruction.

In reaching its conclusion, the court adopted and applied the American concept of separation. The proper interpretation of the doctrine was not so much debated as assumed by common consent. The meaning and content of the First Amendment had already been spelled out by the very same justices in

the *Everson* case, decided within the year. In the *Everson* case, a sharply divided court—5-4—had held that the state of New Jersey could reimburse parents for the expense of transporting their children to and from parochial schools, without violating the First and Fourteenth Amendments. The majority considered the case to present a borderline situation, but viewed the religious issue posed as subordinate to the welfare aspect of the state legislation. The minority found the religious issue under the establishment of religion clause controlling and concluded that the state aid indirectly conferred upon religious institutions by the legislation under review was precisely the type of measure condemned by the First Amendment. Both the majority and minority, although disagreeing on the facts and as to the application of the First Amendment to the facts, nevertheless agreed that the correct interpretation of the Amendment is that it erected a wall of separation between church and state which bars public assistance to any one or all religions or sects and that the prohibitions of the First Amendment are made binding upon the states under the Fourteenth Amendment.

* * *

The *McCullum* decision, along with the *Everson* case, now makes the precise intent of the framers of the First Amendment to be mainly of historical interest. The Supreme Court has studied the problem of historical origin and has pronounced a view which it holds to be compatible with both the historic past and the living doctrine. Here is the meaning and scope given to the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment by the court in the *Everson* case, and reaffirmed in the *McCullum* case:

Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force or influence a person to go to or to remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a

belief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or for professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance or non-attendance. No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the Federal Government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect "a wall of separation between Church and State."

In the *McCullum* case, counsel for the Champaign board of education argued that historically the First Amendment was intended to forbid only government preference of one religion over another, not an impartial government assistance to all religions, and that the Fourteenth Amendment did not make the establishment of religion clause applicable as a prohibition against the states. After giving full consideration to these arguments, the Court rejected them. Justice Black, speaking for the majority justices, expressly reiterated the principle of the *Everson* case that a state cannot pass laws which "aid all religions" and ruled the Champaign system unconstitutional because operation of the states' compulsory education machinery assists and is integrated with the program of religious instruction carried on by separate religious sects and that the state cannot consistently with the First and Fourteenth Amendments utilize its public school system to aid any or all religious faiths or sects in the dissemination of their teachings.

The conclusion of the court was supported in an instructive, separate, concurring opinion by Justice Frankfurter in which the historic backgrounds of the American doctrine of separation of church and state and of arrangements for religious instruction in the

public schools or under public school auspices were comprehensively considered. Justice Jackson, in an additional separate opinion, although agreeing with the result, expressed doubt as to the standing of the complainant, an avowed atheist, to raise the question at issue, and also felt that the relief granted prohibiting all religious instruction in the public schools was too broad and indefinite.

UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS

It was hoped that the *McCullum* decision would end the bitter controversy over the First Amendment and the scope of the doctrine of separation of church and state. Unfortunately, it has become only the starting point for an even more acrimonious dispute. Few, if any, judicial pronouncements in this century have caused quite the debate unloosed by the *McCullum* decision. Specifically, the chief unresolved questions are: 1) whether released-time religious instruction conducted outside the public school buildings and off the school grounds is illegal and, 2) whether federal aid to education would be illegal if extended to sectarian institutions. Collateral to these main inquiries is the question whether the *McCullum* decision is anti-religious in its nature, and whether it endorses atheism, as has been charged. There is also a further problem raised by the decision, namely: whether government support or aid to religion tends to result in government supervision or control.

* * *

The confusion has been deepened of late by differing decisions of a Missouri and of a New York court. In the Missouri case, the court barred continuance of the St. Louis system of released time, which differed from the Champaign system in that classes in religious instruction were not held in school buildings, while in the New York case the court upheld a similar released time system as not violating the rule laid down in the *McCullum* case.

61 • Education Based upon Religion

Despite the decisions of the United States Supreme Court, the issue of church vs. state, as Siegel points out above, is far from settled. There are some persons who hold that, since education can be an instrument for either good or ill, it ought, regardless of legal considerations, to be geared to the highest purposes possible and that these are no less than the purposes of the Supreme Being.

If the school does not serve these supreme purposes, they argue, then it must either neglect its primary task of molding character or else it must mold the child in accordance with some arbitrary human point of view. Hence, if education is to rise above sheer indoctrination and at the same time develop the individual as a human being, it must be directed by the fundamental purposes of human existence as defined by God's will as revealed through the doctrines of His church. This is the view generally held by the Catholic church and by many lay Catholics. Obviously, if this view is accepted, there can be no separation of church and state in the matter of education. ✓

Some Protestants, like many Catholics, believe that education ought to be grounded in religion. Moreover, in some cases at least, their reasons for thinking so are quite similar to those of many Catholic scholars, such as Jacques Maritain. This segment of the Protestant faith begins with the assumption that modern man is bewildered and is approaching a state of moral chaos because he has built his security exclusively upon belief in the essential goodness of human nature and in inevitable material progress. Faced with problems of increasing complexity, modern man has sought solutions in science only to find that they are eternally fleeting. Reliance solely upon science for security and peace of mind, according to this position, can end only in bewilderment and despair. The only solution is to build a theological view of life into all activities—economic, political, and social. One of the ways of building such a view into every aspect of life is to build it into education so that all instruction will be colored by theological interpretations. The only road to salvation now open to modern man is to return to the religious bases of society which were abandoned under the impact of science and materialism.

In the following passage, an outstanding Catholic layman, F. J. Sheed, presents a Catholic version of the belief that education must be based on religion; and Arnold S. Nash, an able Protestant scholar, presents a common Protestant argument for this point of view. There is good reason to think that these two writers are representative of significant segments of their respective religious faiths. But there is a wide variety among both Catholics and Protestants respecting the place of religion in public education. We must be careful, therefore, not to assume that the excerpts reprinted below accurately reflect the views of all Catholics or all Protestants.

A Catholic View

Educating the young is in its nature one of the most serious of occupations, and as it is practised one of the most frivolous. Its purpose is to fit human beings for living. But you cannot fit people for *living*, unless you know what the purpose of living is: you can have no reasonable understanding of any activity—living as a totality or any of its departments—if you do not know its purpose. Therefore the first question an educator must ask himself is whether he knows the right purpose of life, the right purpose of the living human being. The questions which occupy most of the discussion space are secondary to that and depend upon it for their answers: conditioning the child, the best subjects to teach, the best arrangement of society, the validity or otherwise of the profit motive—not one of them can be answered intelligently, till you can say what man's purpose is. You do not even know (save on the most obvious questions) what is good or bad for a man till you know the purpose of his existence. That is good for him which helps, that is bad for him which hinders, the achievement of the purpose of his being. The first of all questions in the practical order is this of the purpose of human life.

Now the first mark of frivolity in an educator is not to ask himself the question at all. And one has met such men. The second—and lesser—mark of frivolity is to ask the question but to be too easily satisfied with the answer.

One obvious means of finding out the purpose of anything is to examine it and see what it can do and what can be done with it. But this must be clearly recognized for what it is—a crude and unsatisfactory expedient only to be resorted to if no better is available. It can almost never give certainty save in the lower grades of existence: and not always there. Ordinarily the examination shows quite a number of things that can be done

with it, and one's tendency is to choose the one most convenient to oneself. And there is no reason why there should not be many other things that could be done with it which the examination fails to discover—since the investigator is not omniscient and is likely to overlook possibilities unfamiliar to him. In fact, the only strictly scientific way to find out the purpose of anything is to ask its maker. He, if he be not a lunatic, will know what he made it to do. If he (being a truthful person) tells you, then you know the thing's purpose. Otherwise you can only guess. The Catholic position is that man has a maker and that the maker has said what he made man for. Therefore—not of himself but by the revelation of God—the Catholic knows the purpose of man's life and, if he be an educator, he has the answer to what we have seen is the *first* question. He may be a thoroughly bad educator—perhaps through being a born fool—but he has the first requirement. Has anyone else?

For the life of me I do not see how anyone else can have it, or can even think he has it. If you believe either that man has not a maker or that the maker has made no statement, how do you proceed to satisfy yourself as to the purpose of human life? You are left only with the unsatisfactory expedient of examining man to find out what he can do (or what can be done with him). The first result of such an examination is the discovery that man can do a bewildering number of things.

You assume—and remember it is only an assumption—that you have not overlooked any possibility of the human compound; that there is nothing there that you have not seen. Heaven knows you have no reason to assume this. But it is a great simplification to do so: indeed if you are not prepared to make this totally unfounded assumption, you would have to admit defeat right at the start, and this would be a great pity.

[From F. J. Sheed, "Education for the Realization of God's Purpose," *The Social Frontier*, 1 (Jan. 1935): 10-11. Reprinted by permission.]

UNCERTAINTY BECOMES THE BASIS OF TYRANNY

Anyhow—here you are with a bewildering variety of things man can do. Which one—or which group—of these are you going to choose as the primary ones, the dominating ones, the ones that *you shall choose* to regard as containing his purpose? You will do one of three things:

1. You will select the things that you yourself most enjoy doing and devote your life to their cultivation. This is great fun while it lasts. Its intellectual or scientific value is nil.

2. You will select those which honestly seem to you to be the highest.

3. You will select those which will make the world work out most conveniently for yourself, and this, if you happen to be powerful, is dangerous. Thus factory owners discovered that the poor could do things with their hands, decided that this was the purpose of their existence, educated them with this in mind, and, indeed, proceeded to call them "hands," *tout court*.

Now this last is obviously a tyranny. What does not so immediately strike one is that the second method is a tyranny too. The essence of tyranny is not cruelty, but imposition—the imposition of yourself. It may be a nice ideal-

istic self, or a cruel and brutal self. But for an educator to impose upon those he is educating *his own personal view* of the purpose of human life is a tyranny. No one who knows what knowing means can pretend that he *knows* the purpose of human life as a result of his own examination of human beings and human history; he can claim no more than probability. And I repeat that the educator who proceeds to shape human lives according to his own guess is exercising a tyranny.

He may reply that he can do no other; that since there is no means of discovering man's purpose with certainty, he can do no more than act according to the best light he has. But let him at least not be unaware that there is an alternative—the possibility that man has a maker and that the maker has spoken—the possibility, in short, that the purpose *can* be known with certainty. The educator who, being aware that there is such an alternative, dismisses it without the most searching examination, is guilty of that second grade of frivolity which I mentioned at the beginning. He is continuing the pursuit of an activity which depends *absolutely* upon the answer to one question: and as to that answer he is relying on a guess—merely because it is his own—and leaving uninvestigated the possibility of a certain answer.

A Protestant View

In the last chapter it was argued that knowledge in the epoch before us will derive its "form" from the sociology of knowledge, just as the thought of the modern world was modelled on the mathematico-physical sciences. Moreover we saw that as the implications of the sociological approach to knowledge were worked out, we were led to the much deeper

problem of man's ontological status in the universe, a conclusion which brings up the question, "From whence shall we derive the ontology of knowledge in the coming *speculum mentis*?" My answer to that question is that we must turn to a source of enlightenment which is aware of the problem of human existence at a depth to which what is left

[From Arnold S. Nash, *The University and the Modern World*, pp. 252-261, 262, 287-288, 291. Copyright 1944 by The Macmillan Company, Publishers, and used with their permission. Footnotes omitted.]

of Western culture, whether democratic-capitalist or democratic-socialist, is not accustomed. In a day when the optimistic presuppositions of a culture are so obviously at variance with the fate of the civilization on which that culture depends, it is clear that a fresh source of wisdom is needed. And from where can that wisdom come unless it be from a re-interpretation of the Judaic-Christian tradition which, having outlasted the fall of many civilizations, has therefore a source beyond any one of them?

Western civilization at the present juncture is not unlike imperial Rome during the third century. In each case a tremendous social structure has had no purpose outside its own maintenance and that is why in each age the learned men have sought refuge in cynicism while the common people, in fear of the unknown, have followed astrologers and the like. In Gibbon's famous words, all religions, like all philosophies, were to the learned, equally false, to the ignorant equally true, and to the magistrates equally useful.

Imperial Rome, seeking a faith which could justify its existence, seized upon Christianity and under Constantine sought to achieve the imperial dream of permanent peace by harnessing the force of the growing Christian Church. However, it was in vain. Rome fell but Christianity produced Augustine to lay the spiritual and indeed the intellectual foundations of a culture that for nearly a thousand years shone brilliantly in literature, painting, architecture and philosophy.

* * *

Under the leadership of Augustine, the Christian Church in the early years of the Fifth Century was enabled to seize its opportunities and steer a passage amid the dangers of the Gothic invasions of the Empire. Can contemporary Christian thinkers perform for their day and generation the equivalent of Augustine's service to declining Rome? Can they ensure that, in the coming intellectual reconstruction, a new interpretation of the specifically Christian insights into the nature of man and the significance of the historical process will replace the twin pillars of the op-

timistic view of human nature and the inevitability of progress upon which—in spite of their shaky foundations—the structure of modern knowledge was built?

The school of thought represented by R. M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler would say that they can, if they will return to the intellectual synthesis of the Middle Ages, based on Thomistic metaphysics. We can readily admit that the modern mind has much to learn from the scholastic *speculum mentis*. However, that is a different story from seeking to put back the clock of history. To accept the inadequacy of a philosophy of life based on "modern" science alone does not mean that we can reject the new knowledge of man and the universe revealed by modern science. Such knowledge, of itself, may not provide an adequate foundation in the coming intellectual reconstruction but that there must be a place for it in the superstructure cannot be denied. The Scholastic system collapsed because it had no place for the experimental method or for the facts discovered thereby. In effect the Scholastic philosophers were attributing final and ultimate authority to one of man's own creations. In other words, the Scholastic synthesis became an idol, and like any other idol, its feet of clay were revealed when it could no longer support the demands that life made upon it. In a world where the gap between Christianity and the common life is paralleled only by that between Christian thinking and secular knowledge it is salutary to remember that, as we have seen in a previous chapter, the medieval synthesis collapsed because the Thomistic separation between the truths discovered by human reason and those given in revelation was the reflection in the sphere of knowledge of the gulf which Thomas Aquinas placed between secular work (*opus manuale*) and specifically religious activities (*opera spiritualia*). The method adopted by the medieval church to bridge the gulf was as disastrous in life as it was in learning for it meant that theologians claimed the right to dictate to scientists what they should discover and ecclesiastics assumed the power to dictate to merchants the prices at which they could

buy and sell their goods, while in politics, Hildebrand, rightly claiming that political activities should be subordinate to spiritual principles, wrongly thought that that meant that force could be used by the Church to coerce kings and people alike.

* * *

As the dams of medieval restriction broke, each sphere of human activity: scientific investigation, artistic endeavor, business enterprise and political effort developed along autonomous lines.

In countries influenced by Calvin, like the United States, or in England where the established Church retained its medieval ethos, an attempt was made to view the separate spheres of human endeavor at one and the same time as autonomous and yet as fields within which Christianity was relevant. On the one hand, the relevance of Christianity to the world of science or the world of business was denied but, on the other hand, the relevance of Christianity to the life of the individual scientist or business man was affirmed. Thereby an intolerable tension between the life of the individual and the life of society was set up. This tension could not, however, endure under the influence of the self-sufficient, scientific-capitalist, bourgeois mentality, which has dominated modern man. Each separate sphere of human activity soon became secularized as modern man increasingly concerned himself more with the part than the whole.

However, neither could this simple secularization itself last and the final tragic outcome has been that within each sphere a basic principle was enunciated which sought to give meaning to each segment of human life. Thus in art the cliché, "art for art's sake," marked the final separation which emerged between artistic endeavor and Christian thought. Capitalistic economic enterprise, which had begun under Calvin as a divine vocation, soon became a sphere wherein the final arbiter was neither the Will of God nor an ethical norm but the doctrine that "business is business." Scientific investigation, which for Kepler had been, to use his own

words, the attempt "to declare the grace of God's works to the man who will read the evidence of it," deteriorated into industrial research, governed by patent laws, or into an intellectual exercise, unrelated to the strivings of the masses herded into the hovels of the manufacturing towns of Europe and America, but governed by the high sounding precept "truth for truth's sake." Political authority, whether of popes or emperors, which in theory at least and so with some restraint in practice, had been limited by principles more sacred than itself—the divine reason and the moral law—now claimed absolute authority: in common parlance "my country right or wrong" was viewed as expressing an adequate governing principle for the political relations between states. The attitude toward law within a state has been no better. On its theoretical side the study of law has deteriorated from jurisprudence, as the attempt to relate legal concepts to ethical concepts (so-called "normative law") to the science of law (so-called "positive law") which is solely concerned with correlating court decisions. In the practice of law, the task of the lawyer is generally conceived as the achievement of a means whereby the client's wishes can be gratified rather than the discovery of a solution objectively right in relation to the claims of the contending parties and in the light of the existent legal code.

* * *

After four centuries of intellectual endeavor the modern man finds that he has exchanged the intellectual idolatry of Scholasticism for the intellectual polytheism of scientific positivism. In the universities of those countries which still retain liberal democracy, the influence of this intellectual polytheism has been calamitous, for it has meant, to use the frank words of the present Archbishop of Canterbury in a sermon before the University of Oxford, that a university "is a place where a multitude of studies are conducted, with no relationship between them except those of simultaneity and juxtaposition." In theory the liberal university rejects the attempt to teach a unified concep-

tion of the world. But it has not failed to teach a *Weltanschauung*. On the fundamental questions of life and destiny, as Kierkegaard has reminded modern man, neutrality is impossible. Even to take up a *neutral* position is to take up *some* position. However, the contemporary university has not even been unconsciously neutral for it has taught more or less explicitly a philosophy whose fundamental tenets are that man, if not perfect, is, like the world itself, slowly getting better and that pre-suppositionless science, as the only way of reaching truth, is the main agent whereby—through education—this progress can be maintained. This creed, as we have seen in previous chapters, is now shattered beyond all possible hope of repair.

Either the lead toward a new interpretation of life which will guide mankind in the face of the catastrophic forces that have shaken the world to its foundation, will come from those fitted by training and inspired by moral insights adequate to furnish such a lead or the field will be left, to use Adolf Löwe's words, referring to Nazis in his native land, "to the mountebanks with their petty speculations in every sense of that word."

To the Christian university teacher comes, therefore, the summons to share in a task of supreme moment. It is to help create a *Weltanschauung* which steers a middle path between the Charybdis of liberal atomism and the Scylla of totalitarian dogmatism. Such a task will not be accomplished by the labors of the gifted few any more than the massive structure of modern science could be built by the genius of Roger Bacon. Modern science could only make great strides when an army of thinkers had been prepared by the collapse of the medieval world to venture forth on a voyage of new discovery. That is why Galileo in the seventeenth century rather than Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century can be called the father of modern science. In our day it is a work to which all scholars are called as they face the impact upon thought and scholarship of the crumbling of the economic, political and spiritual foundations of the world in which they live.

Since professional theologians rarely view

their task as that of furnishing a synoptic account of God, man and the universe, Christian scholars in the so-called secular subjects have a peculiar responsibility for the working out of this new Christian "map of knowledge." The crying need is for Christian thinkers from the specialized fields of the natural and social sciences, history, engineering, architecture and medicine who, while rejecting the right of theologians to dictate their conclusions can yet unite with them in the common task of relating these conclusions to a theological understanding of human destiny. The venture is not an easy one for the very categories of our thinking in every subject in the university curriculum have been moulded by a tradition which, as we have seen, disclaimed the need for such a unity even when it was preaching one unconsciously. The Christian natural scientist—the very unfamiliarity and strangeness of that phrase indicates the plight in which we find ourselves—has been content with a view, which, going back from Eddington through Faraday and Pasteur to Newton, maintains that religion and science can never clash because they never meet.

* * *

The cause of this failure of Christian scholars to relate their Christian convictions to the specialized knowledge of the academic subjects which they profess is not far to seek. It lies in the widespread but fallacious notion that religion is merely one subject among others in the curriculum of a school or college.

* * *

What, therefore, is the conclusion of the matter? It is that the Christian Churches need a fellowship of lay theologians or Christian scholars who would view it as a part of their vocation as a Christian intelligentsia to create a Christian world view within which the conclusions of the specialized subjects of the university curriculum could be given their ultimate meaning in terms of a specifically Christian philosophy of man and of his relation to the historical process. The task is one in which all Christian scholars whether they

be natural scientists, social scientists, historians, philosophers, literary critics and the like are called to co-operate. It is nothing less than the creation of a Christian *speculum mentis*, which, on the one hand, avoids the Charybdis of the liberal conception of the complete autonomy of each academic subject and, on the other, the Scylla of totalitarian scholasticisms in which facts have to be twisted into a dogmatic framework. No one who knows the history of the medieval university under the complete control of ecclesiastics or of the modern university under the domination of the single political party in totalitarian countries will wish to deny that freedom and independence in teaching and research must be conserved. Neither can it be disputed that one task of the university is to witness to the value of the independent and critical pursuit of truth as such and not to buttress the doctrines of political parties or religious bodies. The university, in fact, betrays its mission as soon as it claims to teach final and ultimate truth in the form of scholastic, whether Thomistic or Marxist or Fascist, systems which have no place for new facts. We may see "as through a glass" but of one fact we can be certain. It is that any intellectual synthesis which declines to believe that "the Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from His word" is intellectual idolatry.

Such a task can only be accomplished by a world-wide movement of Christian scholars who can follow the trails blazed ahead by pioneers in this field as apparently diverse as William Temple and Reinhold Niebuhr; Jacques Maritain and Andre Philip; V. A. Demant and J. H. Oldham; T. S. Eliot and Nicholas Berdyaev; Paul Tillich and W. A. Visser't Hooft.

* * *

However, to inveigh against theologians is not to condemn theology. In fact the foregoing argument is a plea that theology should be restored to its rightful position as queen of the sciences in the original sense of the term "science." Such a restoration would begin with a thoroughgoing criticism of the self-sufficient, scientific-capitalist outlook which has moulded the thinking of the modern world. The Nazis and the Communists are no more free from that domination than the bourgeois plutocracies; it is no better from the Christian perspective to worship race or class than idolatrously to elevate "business is business" into an eternal principle. The Christian intellectual takes his stand on the conviction that lesser loyalties, like class, race, nation, science or church, must take their place as subservient to that which transcends and judges them all—God.

62 • Public Education Based upon Religion: a Dissenting View

The preceding selection presented two arguments—one Catholic and one Protestant—in defense of grounding education in religion. Let us now turn to a counterargument. In the selection that follows, William O. Stanley discusses the main points of the argument that religion is the proper basis for education in the light of historical and social facts. Professor Stanley maintains that the claim that moral character, peace of mind, and social stability are possible only if men commit themselves to some form of Christianity is an empirical statement and hence subject to the test of both logic and fact. He then brings to bear upon this claim the facts of history, sociology, and cultural anthropology.

An important group of educators insist that reconstruction in education and in society must be grounded ultimately in the sacred tenets of Christianity. According to this view, a sound and healthy society can be built only upon the solid foundations supplied by a profound faith in the great spiritual, moral, and intellectual truths of revealed religion. But the Western world since the Renaissance and the Reformation has progressively adopted, under the guise of liberalism and of scientific empiricism, a secular and materialistic outlook. And, as the Church has always predicted, the acids of materialism have steadily corroded men's faith in religious authority. This is serious enough in itself but, it is argued, the effects of materialism on the foundations of civilization have not been limited exclusively, or even primarily, to the purely religious sphere. For, it is asserted, rational civil authority rests in the last analysis upon the sanction of the moral law; and, in its turn, the acceptance of the moral law has its roots in universal religious beliefs. Hence, according to this thesis, it is no accident that under the dominance of a liberal-scientific philosophy, bewilderment, cynicism, and selfishness have replaced the authority of the moral law or that rational civil authority has everywhere given way either to rampant individualism or to arbitrary economic, political, and military power. Confusion and conflict are the natural fruits of materialism, as totalitarianism is the logical end of the moral, intellectual, and social chaos which it produces. The only salvation, therefore, now open to a civilization suffering from its own errors and sins is to return, with a humble and contrite heart, to the religious bases of society abandoned during the Renaissance and the Reformation.

This position, of course, is an outgrowth of the belief that the ultimate foundations of the

true and of the good are to be found in an *a priori* and eternal realm which transcends human experience; a premise which, in one form or another, has been the central theme of philosophical controversy for considerably more than two thousand years. Any extended analysis of the basic philosophical issues raised by the thesis that a stable society can be founded only on the solid rock of Christian dogma is obviously out of the question here. Fortunately, however, it is possible to appraise the position with which we are here concerned quite apart from these grave philosophical questions. For the claim that a stable civil society must be grounded in the tenets of Christian theology, while an outgrowth of the belief in the supernatural foundations of the true and the good, is not a necessary deduction from that doctrine. On the contrary, it is a mundane and empirical proposition which may be tested by historical and sociological fact rather than by philosophical or theological argument.

Judged by these tests, the thesis that civil society must be grounded in Christian theology has very little to recommend it. For the historical record discloses stable and tranquil societies which existed for centuries and which were not in any sense built on a Christian foundation.

Nor is the case materially strengthened if the argument is shifted to the thesis that moral character can be formed only in the context of religious instruction. For, in the first place, even if this proposition could be established, it would not warrant the assertion that Christian theology is necessary to the formation of moral character. And, in the second place, the known facts do not confirm the contention that religious instruction is a necessary ingredient in the development of morality and conscience. It is true that a religious faith, taught as a way of life rather

[From William O. Stanley, *Education and Social Integration*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953, pp. 175-180. Reprinted by permission. Some footnotes omitted.]

than merely as an intellectual creed, does shape character. But it is clear from the obvious and tested facts of social psychology, anthropology, and sociology that character is molded by the participation of the young in the operations of the cultural system and in the way of life obtaining in their social group, religious or otherwise.

Nor can it be said that moral standards can arise only from some religious faith. It is possible, although on the basis of present historical and anthropological knowledge it would be difficult to prove, that in the past all noble and profound moral ideals have emerged, in the first instance, as an organic part of a great religious communion. But even if it were established, this statement would not warrant the conclusion that moral ideals can arise only in this manner. Nor, more to the point, would it justify the claim that, once the notion of moral standards and requirements has arisen, further moral development and evolution is necessarily bound to, or dependent upon, religious dogma.

There is, however, another aspect of the argument which has not been considered in the preceding paragraphs and which demands attention at this point. In this form, it asserts simply that a democratic society rests upon a kind of morality which can be created only in a people nurtured in the tenets and doctrines of the Christian faith. The fundamental principles of democracy, so the argument runs, are directly derived from the great moral teachings of Christianity, and have no meaning apart from these teachings.

Undoubtedly there is an element of truth in this thesis. The basic democratic emphasis on the infinite moral worth of human personality is closely related to the Christian doctrine of the supreme value and dignity of the human soul; and it is a fact that, in the Western world, democracy has drawn inspiration and sustenance from the Christian tradition. Nevertheless, it is a grave error to assume that democracy is a necessary corollary of Christianity. The Christian doctrine of the supreme value and dignity of the human soul, together with the concomitant belief in

the equality and brotherhood of man, have frequently been interpreted in ways that are fully compatible with decidedly undemocratic social, political, and economic philosophies. In fact, the traditional and, until very recently, the prevailing social philosophy enunciated in the name of Christianity has been that of a hierarchical society composed of diverse social orders, ordained and sanctioned by God and endowed by Divine Will with the rights and duties appropriate to their station. A distinguished Catholic philosopher, Jacques Maritain, has categorically denied, with clarity and precision so far as the historical record is concerned, that Christianity in any way implies democracy.

The Christian religion is annexed to no temporal regime; it is compatible with all forms of legitimate government; it is not its business to determine which type of civil rule men must adopt *hic et nunc*; it imposes none on their will nor, so long as the essential principles are respected, does it specify any particular system of political philosophy, no matter how general, such as that system [democracy] which occupies us at the moment. . . .¹

* *

One can be a Christian and achieve one's salvation while militating in favor of any political regime whatsoever, always on condition that it does not trespass against natural law and the law of God. One can be a Christian and achieve one's salvation while defending a political philosophy other than a democratic philosophy, just as one was able to be a Christian, in the days of the Roman Empire, while accepting the social regime of slavery, or in the seventeenth century while holding to the political regime of absolute monarchy. . . . It was not given to believers faithful to Catholic dogma but to rationalists to proclaim in France the rights of man and the citizen,

¹ From *The Twilight of Civilization*, by Jacques Maritain, copyright 1943, Sheed and Ward, Inc., New York, p. 60.

to the Puritans to strike the last blow at slavery in America, to atheistic communists to abolish in Russia the absolutism of private profit.²

Moreover, without in any way ignoring or deprecating the very real contribution which the Christian ethic has made to the development of the democratic tradition in Western Europe and America, it is not true that Christianity is a necessary premise or precondition of democracy. Unquestionably, democratic institutions and relationships do require a profound belief in the dignity and worth of human personality, but the Christian Epic is not the sole source of that vital doctrine. Other philosophies, secular and religious, have proclaimed and honored the supreme moral worth and dignity of human beings. Indeed, the first systematic formulation of democratic theory, inspired by Athenian political philosophy, appeared several centuries before the birth of Christ.

The basic issue raised by the claim that Christian dogma provides the essential principle of integration in education and in society, however, is nothing less than the great problem of the relationship between church and state. Historically, American democracy has insisted on a sharp separation of church and state. So long as this historic principle is maintained, it is difficult to see how the premises of the public welfare or the foundation of education can be consciously and directly grounded in the tenets of any religious creed. And, if this principle is to be abandoned, intelligent adherents of democracy must ask, in view of the historical record, what the consequences may be for the democratic belief in freedom of thought and inquiry. Moreover, in those parts of the world inhabited by a large number of diverse religious sects—to say nothing of the urgent need for some basis of global unity—it is necessary to ask which creed is to be taken as the authentic vehicle of religious truth.

² Jacques Maritain, *Christianity and Democracy* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), pp. 36-38.

It is impossible to ignore, or to deny, the gravity and the magnitude of this last question. The world has never enjoyed a common religious faith; and since the Reformation, Western society itself has been split into a welter of conflicting theological camps which have frequently engaged in prolonged and bitter controversy. Religious unity in the world, in Western civilization, or in the United States, simply does not exist at the present time. Nor, so far as the present writer can see, is there any hope whatever that the present schisms and cleavages in religious beliefs will disappear at any time in the near future. Centuries of experience have revealed the fact that in this area, men's commitments have always been peculiarly inflexible, stubborn, and tenacious.

Further, the history of Europe and America reveals, if it reveals anything at all, that in a society divided into divergent sectarian groups, the attempt to base public policy or public education on religious principles nearly always results in grim and irreconcilable conflicts. It is important to note that these conflicts have not been due primarily to the philosophical differences between naturalism and supernaturalism. On the contrary, the most persistent and implacable religious contests have been waged between rival brands of eternal and absolute truth. "Religion by its very nature," observes a recent biographer of Catherine de Medici, "is incapable of accommodation. Founded on the unquestioning faith of its followers in a set of immutable principles upon which eternal salvation depends, it cannot compromise without confounding its claims."³ Hence, during the era of religious wars, in the eloquent words of Senator James A. Reed which were called forth by a modern attempt (of the Ku Klux Klan) to relight those fires, "armies marched and counter-marched across the battle fields of Europe, until the rivers ran red with blood of the slain and the fields were

³ From *Catherine de Medici and the Lost Revolution*, by Ralph Roeder, copyright 1937, by Ralph Roeder. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York, p. 288.

bleached white by the bones of the dead.”⁴ And, to put it bluntly, these religious struggles continued unabated until all but one of the rival claimants were eliminated or until men agreed to separate religion and politics.

The world today desperately needs a solid basis for moral and intellectual unity. Moreover, in the opinion of the writer, the roots of the Hebraic-Christian tradition have sunk so deep into the heart of Western culture that they cannot be removed in any predictable future without an operation so violent and

⁴ Senator James A. Reed, in an address delivered in Kansas City in April 1924. Quoted from memory.

so ruthless that it would destroy any hope of a humane and democratic society. Nevertheless, since various types of non-Christian religious traditions are as deeply embedded in other parts of the world, Christianity obviously cannot serve as the foundation of a world order. Even in the Western world—where more than one sect has secured any considerable body of adherents—the nature of religious differences is such that a serious attempt to base the premises of the public welfare or the axioms of public education on a particular system of religious tenets would probably result, sooner or later, in a return to the era of religious wars.

63 • Religion in the Schools: Pro

There are many religious leaders and laymen who—although they would not subscribe to the view that religion should be the primary factor in determining educational objectives or that it should influence all instruction—believe that religion should be studied in the schools. The view now to be considered is that religion is an important part of the culture, perhaps the most important part; that it is the task of the school to induct the immature members of society into the culture; and that hence, if the task of the school is to be performed adequately, religion must be taught in the school.

This view has been most clearly formulated by the Committee on Religion and Education, a group of laymen and religious leaders working under the auspices of the American Council on Education, one of the most objective and influential educational organizations in the United States. This Committee holds that the school should teach its pupils about religion in modern society—about the various religions, their role in the community, and their history and benefits to man—but that the school is to treat all religions or sects equally and objectively. The student is, however, to be encouraged to consider religion seriously as a desirable way of life for himself.

This concept of the place of religion in the schools strikes a sympathetic chord in many people. They recognize the importance of religion in the traditions of the nation and the reasons why students should become acquainted with these traditions.

[From Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education, “The Relation of Religion to Public Education: The Basic Principles,” *Religious Education*, 42 (May-June 1947): 129-163. Reprinted by special permission of the Religious Education Association, 545 W. 111 St., New York 25, N.Y. Selection taken from pp. 135-137, 147-149.]

The assumption that a school system from which all study of religion should be excluded was what the American people really wanted when they secularized education runs counter not only to our educational, but to our religious history. Contrary to what seems to be a common assumption, organized religion was much less strong at the time the Republic was founded than at the time when the struggle over religion in the schools was at its height. It is estimated that at the end of the colonial period not more than 5 percent of the population were active church members. The percentage almost trebled in the next fifty years. These facts do not invalidate our generalizations about the secularization of the culture, for church membership is not an index of the influence of religion upon the social order. The facts do, however, make it difficult to regard the exclusion of religion from the schools as a direct expression of flagging interest in religion as such. Our purpose here is to correct the impression that the divorce of education from religion was what was desired when sectarian teaching was banished from the schools.

Thus, it appears that while the secularization of education took its place historically as an aspect of a long-term cultural trend, it has quite outrun the intention of those educational leaders who initiated the movement. In so doing, it probably reinforced the general secularist trend in America. May it be supposed that any interest or concern that does not find active expression in the public schools can hold a permanent place in the public mind. We are not suggesting that all education of the young must take place in school. Obviously, the school is not the only educator. The home is probably most influential in putting a stamp upon the characters of children and giving them an outlook on life. Organized recreation is also a great educator. But these extra school agencies are not, and should not be, expected to preempt an educational area from which thereafter the school remains aloof. On the contrary, the importance of the home and of organized play impel the school to give increasing atten-

tion to education for family life and to extra school recreational activities. To leave religious education entirely to church and synagogue is in contrast to educational policy in other matters. To do this is to invite the same indifference to religion that we should expect to result in the political sphere from ignoring the institutions of government.

* * *

Whenever the subject we have here under discussion is broached the question arises: What is meant by religion?

* * *

In simple terms religion implies an ultimate reality to which supreme allegiance must be given. To this ultimate reality men have from time immemorial given a name—God. The religious man finds warrant for all his conceptions of worth, of right, of duty, and of human destiny in his relationship to this ultimate reality. There is a wide difference in the ways in which men define this concept of God, ranging from highly personal to abstract philosophical terms; from emphasis on the transcendent to emphasis on the immanent; to one that frankly supernatural conception to one that endows the cosmos itself with spiritual purpose and power. However, religion affirms overwhelmingly a reality that transcends the flux of events and constrains men toward the true and the good.

On the subjective side religion commands men to respond to divine imperative. It challenges them to an act of faith and to a commitment of the will. The extent to which religion is rational and the extent to which it is emotional are matters on which no agreement exists, but that it is profoundly volitional, calling for supreme personal commitment and loyalty, all are agreed. What one believes about God, about man and about the world has momentous consequences in life and conduct.

But religion in human experience is by no means wholly accounted for in individualistic terms. It is also social and corporate. It expresses itself in institutions which organize themselves about the function of group wor-

ship. Here again there is great variety. There are highly elaborated rituals that have grown up in the more sacramentarian forms of religion, and there is the simple ritual of silence in which the worshippers feel themselves to be in the presence of God. The unifying principle is organized worship in which men seek to "make the Most High their habitation." In the churches and synagogues of America there is an extremely wide range of theological as well as ritualistic differences, but they have in common this principle of corporate worship.

• It should be noted that throughout these pages religion is referred to as a phase of the culture because we believe the responsibility of public education with reference to religion is determined by fidelity to the culture in its entirety. In an important sense, however, religion is more than a part of the culture. A vital religious faith permeates every cultural good and influences every aspect of life. To those who take it seriously, religious faith is the spiritual foundation of society and indispensable to an enduring social structure.

* * *

What, then, is to be the goal of the study of religion in the schools, if there is to be such study? It is frequently said that teaching *about religion* is not teaching religion, and that the public school can make no contribution in this field because it is obliged to stop short of anything significant or worth while. In part this may be repeating an error that we pointed out earlier, namely, assuming that teaching in any field where there is sharp divergence of views means selecting one among alternative positions and "plugging" for it. Even so, to limit teaching to areas in which there is substantial agreement would leave education powerless at the cutting edge of a changing culture. The difficulty here would perhaps have been avoided if the term "study religion" had been used instead of the term "teach religion." Old habits of thought are hard to overcome even for educators.

But there is a sense in which the objection noted above is relevant and significant: the difference between acquiring information

about a subject and having a meaningful learning experience is real and substantial. There is wide agreement, as we pointed out earlier, that significant learning is an active process. It culminates in "acceptance to act upon. . . ." It is for this reason that we often hear it said that character, or religion, or democracy cannot be *taught*, but must be *caught*. We think it much more in line with experience to say that the "catching" of such qualities of life as are implied in such a statement is itself of the very stuff of the learning process and is at the heart of the educational enterprise. Indeed, this is implicit in the emphasis on activity in modern educational theory. But to recognize this aspect of learning makes the distinction between *learning about* and a complete *learning experience* very real and important. The current interest in religious education will not, and should not, be satisfied with acquiring a familiarity with religious history or even a familiarity with religion as empirical fact in community life. The position we are taking requires us to face this inadequacy of mere objective study. To do so, however, only serves to make explicit our conception of all wholesome education as induction into the life of one's world through continuous meaningful and rewarding participation. Where this is not going on, something less than an adequate education is occurring. In its broadest sense religious education implies induction into the life of a religious community, commonly represented by the church and synagogue, which necessarily stand apart from the public schools.

How, then, can we expect much of the school in the sphere of religious education? Those who express skepticism at this point are raising no superficial issue. Yet we think the answer is not far to seek.

To begin with, even the most fundamental learning experience includes "learning about," and often begins in that way. One cannot enter into a friendship, or enroll in a school, or join a church without preliminary acquaintance. The first step in the acceptance of anything new is orientation toward it. Due to the secularization of life and education, contacts with religious life and activity tend

to become less frequent and a vast ignorance of religion prevails. If society is really concerned, as we believe it increasingly is today, that religion should have a more important place in the lives of its youth, a first step is to break through the wall of ignorance about religion and to increase the number of contacts with it. Let it be freely acknowledged that this involves the basic assumption made earlier that religious activity is a normal aspect of life, just as truly as vocational work and political activity are normal aspects of it. Not any and all religious activity, to be sure; but neither can any and all vocational or political activity be given social approval and be encouraged in the school. The first obligation of the school with reference to religion is, we believe, to facilitate intelligent contact with it as it has developed in our culture and among our institutions. The many attempts that have been made in various states to overcome the effect of secularization bear testimony to a popular demand that the schools shall not ignore the claims of religion upon human life.

It is a grave mistake to suppose that the public school, holding as it does in so large part the power to determine the scope of intelligent interest and concern on the part of youth, can be neutral in this matter. The failure to play a part in acquainting the young with the role of religion in the culture while at the same time accepting such responsibility with reference to other phases of the culture, is to be unneutral—to weight the scales against any concern with religion.

We wish to stress as strongly as we can the

belief that no education culminates worthily that does not result in convictions that will guide people in the use of their intelligence, their acquired knowledge, and the resources supplied by their environment. All education involves choices, both on the part of the educator and on the part of the student. Democratic education maximizes the role of student choices as free decisions. But freedom in a real world requires knowledge of the assets and liabilities of the culture in accordance with the broadest consensus of what the good life is. It also requires the capacity to think, judge, and act decisively. It is not the business of public education to secure adherence to any particular religious system or philosophic outlook. But we believe it is the business of public education to impel the young toward a vigorous, decisive personal reaction to the challenge of religion.

It is often complained that the younger generation today lacks convictions. We are in no position to make a quantitative judgment on this point. But to the extent that it is true, it is an indictment of education—not because young people have not been told what to believe but because they have not been irresistibly challenged to make up their minds, to achieve a faith, and to throw the weight of their lives into the struggle to vindicate it. Public education may not propagate religious dogmas or arbitrate religious differences. But if it does not impel students toward the achievement of a faith and to that end create a sensitive awareness of the religious resources upon which men have learned to rely, it is less than education ought to be.

64 • Religion in the Schools: Con

The foregoing statement on the place of religion in the culture and in the school is very plausible. It is so simple and so appealing that one is at first unable to imagine any obstacles it would encounter. If one looks beyond the statement, however, to what the position would entail in practice, all sorts of objections, both theoretical and practical, begin to emerge. The following criticism of the foregoing passage was prepared by

B. Othanel Smith as one of a number of invited reviews of the Committee's report. It attempts to examine the entire report from the standpoint of its internal consistency and its practical and theoretical bearings.

Seeing the moral confusion, social fragmentation, and political and economic unrest in the world and at the same time being keenly sensitive to the diminishing church membership and Sunday school attendance, a few individuals and groups have in recent years become deeply concerned about secularism, especially in the public school. They see in religious education a way of checking these undesirable tendencies, and, like other groups having abundant faith in the schools to accomplish their purposes, they turn to public education to accomplish what the churches have failed to do. Although this report pleads for the study of religion on the theory that religion is a fundamental aspect of the culture and hence should not be neglected by the public school, it derives its support from those who are motivated by the desire to stem the waning influence of the church and synagogue.

The report admits, as any candid study of the educational tradition and the religious facts of this country is compelled to admit, that the study of religion must be non-sectarian. To accomplish this the Committee resurrects the fiction that the teacher can and should be neutral in the study of a controversial subject, a theory which had its brains knocked out over a decade ago. It is now recognized that no controversial question, and surely not a religious issue, can be studied in a value vacuum; that evaluations and judgments are necessarily made, though not always consciously, by both teacher and students at every step of the educative process; and that the claim of neutrality is but a cover for bootlegging value-judgments into the process of education. Even if the neutrality which the Committee desires were possible,

it would be difficult to see how much unbiased teaching would necessarily lead to "a positive attitude toward the values that religion represent to the culture" or an impelling of "the young toward a vigorous, decisive personal reaction to the challenge of religion." The result might be, and in many cases will be, just the opposite. The Committee cannot have it both ways at once.

The report tells us that the purpose of religious study in the schools is to acquire information about religion as it has developed in our culture, its relation to the various aspects of the culture, and the expression of the religious life of the community. In addition, the student is to be impelled toward the acceptance of a religious faith. The ways these purposes are to be attained are not fully developed in the report but it suggests that the Bible be studied as religious literature and that the activities and programs of the churches of the community be given the same place in the school program as are accorded the activities of banks, factories, and markets.

On the surface it appears that these purposes can be attained and the suggested program carried on without incurring sectarian opposition. A look beneath the surface, however, robs this view of its plausibility. It is customary in literature courses not only to study literary selections but also to investigate their history—to study their authors, the conditions under which they were written, their various interpretations, and the like. If the Bible is to become part of the content of courses in literature, surely it must be studied as thoroughly and with as much intellectual respect as is paid to a Dickens novel or a Shakespearean drama. This means that the historical facts about the origin of the scrip-

[From B. Othanel Smith, "Evaluation of the Report," *Religious Education*, 42 (May-June 1947): 181-183. Reprinted by special permission of the Religious Education Association, 545 W. 111 St., New York 25, N.Y.]

tures and their subsequent career would be studied; it means that the various interpretations of biblical passages would be examined and an effort made to evaluate them; it means that biblical characters would be analyzed. Could these things be done without arousing fundamental opposition or the fears, if not the hostility, of the more liberal sects?

The non-sectarian principle is basic to our system of public education and we tamper with it at our peril. Religion may be studied in the schools as suggested by the Committee without persistently favoring a particular sect. But it cannot be done without drawing the fire of various sects at various times, nor without the bitter opposition of those who find their security outside of organized religion. Fifty-six per cent of the people of this country belong to no church. It is reasonable to assume that many of them would oppose efforts to impel children to accept some religious faith, as the Committee advocates. They would do so rightly on the grounds that this is a violation of the non-sectarian principle; that the public school as an arm of the state has no authority to urge acceptance of an organized religion even though no particular sect were implied by the exhortation.

Of course, it can be argued that the Bible is merely to be read or enjoyed as an aesthetic object. But this is hardly what the Committee desires. Moreover, the individual child has a right to ask questions or to express his opinion about the Bible. If he is challenged by the teacher or the class, and he is certain to be in the modern classroom where freedom of thought is encouraged and where there are many sects represented as well as the non-church-going population, the only way of resolving the issue is to appeal to facts or values, or to both. These facts and values are themselves often subjects of controversy among various sects. In any case, religious controversy is almost certain to be unavoidable, especially when the classroom discussion reaches the home.

The picture looks no brighter when we consider the programs and activities of the church and synagogue as the objects of study. Not only would facts about such things as

the recreational programs of the church, services rendered to the sick and the poverty stricken, and the like, be included in the curriculum, but also facts about what the church has from time to time condoned and its effects upon the life of the community. The latter are not always pleasing and discussion of them in the classroom will most certainly bring down the wrath of some elements of the community. Organized religion would be examined in the same way as other social institutions—by their effects upon human beings. How many devout church members would stand by and condone the study of such facts about church membership and community life as are revealed in Thorndike's *Your City*? Moreover, the programs and activities of the religious bodies will necessarily be evaluated by the students and the teacher will unavoidably be involved. The work of one sect will be weighted against that of another. In all these things sectarian opposition will be unavoidable. If they are handled in such a way as to please all, the instruction will be open to serious question by non-church members who constitute the majority of the population.

If the recommendations of this report were carried out, it is by no means certain that organized religion would regain any of its prestige. It is at least an open question that traditional beliefs would be strengthened by religious instruction in the school. One authority on the history of Christianity has observed that "The Bible historically understood is exceedingly dangerous to the inherited traditional faith of the American child."¹

The contention of the Committee that the diminishing influence of the church and synagogue is attributable to the secularization of life is too simple. Perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that the social forces which precipitated the disintegration of the church several centuries ago are still with us and that they have gained in strength and have been joined by new forces. The Committee might well have begun its work with an inquiry into the causes of the rapid decline of the

¹ Conrad Henry Mochlman, *School and Church*, p. 121.

church in the twentieth century. After such a social diagnosis it might have been in a better position to prescribe, and it is almost certain to have reached the conclusion that the declining influence of the synagogue is due to a complex of social forces rather than the failure to study religion in the schools.

The report of the Committee is hortatory rather than analytical. It sounds as if it were

written to soften-up the opposition to the introduction of religious study in the public school, by sliding over the issues with generalities that tend to sooth the reader by explaining away his fears. Its general effect on the casual reader is to induce the specious belief that the relation of church and state is on the whole not to be feared since the separation is only relative anyway.

65 • *The Churches as the Appropriate Agencies for Religious Education*

In the United States it has been assumed for many decades that religious instruction was to be given to children and adults by the church or the synagogue. The desire now to shift the responsibility to the public schools is viewed with considerable misgivings in the following selection, by a prominent rabbi. This desire indicates a recognition of the fact that the churches and synagogues are not so effective in their educational effort as they might be, and the recognition of this fact, Rabbi Morris Adler asserts, is all to the good. But efforts to throw the task of religious education onto the schools also indicate a tendency on the part of religious leaders to run away from their responsibilities, to find some other institution to do what the churches and synagogues have failed to do. This tendency, he points out, is deplorable.

In the following discussion it becomes clear that at least one of the things needed to deal with the problem of religious education is a revival of religious instruction in the churches and the synagogues, and that efforts to inject religion into the schools may well lead to spiritual atrophy and social disunity.

The great zeal which many who are deeply devoted to the cause of religious education have been evidencing in discussions and activities centering about the linking in some form of the public school system with religious instruction is a salutary and hope-stimulating phenomenon. I believe that the attempt to use the public schools to aid religious edu-

cation grows out of a deep disillusionment with the results achieved by Church and Synagogue through their educational programs. A militant dissatisfaction with these results has long been overdue. Though I believe that in their quest for a dissolvent of their disappointment, the proponents of various plans for having the public schools as-

[From Rabbi Morris Adler, "Religion and the Public Schools: The Greater Opportunity," *Religious Education*, 44 (March-April 1949): 72-75. Reprinted by special permission of the Religious Education Association, 545 W. 111 St., New York 25, N.Y.]

sume a positive role in the dissemination of religious knowledge and values have strayed; the basic motivation of the quest is wholly sound and has in it the possibility of ultimate constructive good. Unless the mood of disillusionment deepens and turns into a philosophy of despair, the present discontent and quest may yet be the significant opening of a new era in religious education in America. If we would but look inward instead of outward, the motive-power of our present state of mind can serve us in facing the challenging and critical condition into which religious education has been permitted to lapse.

* * *

I believe that any method which seeks to meet the growing challenge to religious education by utilizing the public schools will prove to be unsatisfactory and under certain conditions, even dangerous. It is not necessary to rehearse the arguments. They have been long and ably analyzed and discussed. I would like to stress however that we should not permit this controversy to be the final expression of the original impulse to bring new life into the field of religious education. The proponents of the "release time" plan or other plans should not return to their former disappointment or permit new chagrin to distress them, if, as it now appears, their proposals are not likely to be implemented. Nor should the antagonists set back at "ease in Zion" with a comforting feeling of safety. The challenge is still clamorous.

It appears to me that we should agree that the center of gravity of religious education is to be sought within the precincts of voluntary associations of religious-minded people. It is the central function of the Church and Synagogue. No change can or should relieve them of this responsibility. Our dissatisfaction with the progress that has hitherto been achieved in this field should lead to a sharp and painful process of self-criticism (which incidentally was shockingly absent in all of the discussions revolving about the problem of religious education and the public schools). Our criticism should not divert us from the core to the periphery, else we will not develop

a program related to the essential problem. What is needed it is evident, is what is needed in every thorough-going and basic spiritual reform, "a new heart." The truth is that we have permitted other aspects of our organized religious life to usurp the primacy of religious training. To take a humble but nonetheless significant example, compare the sum allotted by the average church for choir and vestments and the ministry of music, with the amount set aside as the school budget. Now no one seeks to minimize the significance of a beautiful service. But can it be denied that priority belongs to the less dramatic but more essential work of training children. How often do the spokesmen of religion dedicate their oral or written messages to this problem. In how many expositions of religion are knowledge and training treated as central and indispensable? In the elevation of lay people to positions of prominence in the church or in national religious organizations is religious knowledge regarded as a requisite qualification? Have we really given to religious education that place in our religious life and organization which we profess it deserves, when we bemoan its low estate in our midst? How much consideration, energy and to put it bluntly money, have we made available for the training of teaching personnel for our Church and Synagogue schools? Have we given to the profession of religious education sufficient prestige and economic security to attract young people of spirit and ability? What are the criteria by which one's ministry of religion is adjudged successful and is effectiveness in religious education among them?

This is the searching self-inquiry in which we must engage. Had we a large group of professional teachers in the field of religious education, equipped with knowledge, endowed with zeal and talented in pedagogic skills, the indirect influence wielded would have invaded the whole field of education. Their thinking and the results of their educational efforts would impress themselves upon the whole of educational theory and would direct the attention of all teachers to emphases overlooked or insufficiently stressed

in the general curriculum. Thus would something of the spiritual outlook and influence flow into the mainstream of American education without bringing our schools into any alliance with sectarian religious institutions. We have learned much in theory and practice from the teachers' colleges and school experiences of our colleagues in the field of public education. We are grateful for the many things they taught us. But because such influence has not moved in a "two-way passage" we have not imparted to them and their schools of our spirit and thought and have thus missed a high opportunity to spiritualize their outlook and activity.

We have likewise failed to give sufficient thought to the possibility of extending and enlarging the scope of religious education now generally limited to Sunday mornings. I believe that with an intelligent and persistent program of education of parents, their assent could be won for attendance by their children at religious classes on mid-week afternoons. The opportunity which summer-camps offers to our religious institutions has not been sufficiently grasped. Here we have children in a consistently religious environment living a life in which religious expression and experience can be integrally woven. The number of hours spent in camp under religious influence will be more numerous by several times than the hours of a year of Sunday School attendance or even the hours spent in mid-week instruction September to June. The setting-up of nurseries in our Churches and Synagogues for pre-school children would enable us to leave a significant deposit of religious conditioning and influence in the impressionable consciousness of our very young. It is in this area of direct and unmediated contact with parents, children and homes that the greatest challenge to religious education is to be found.

There is one consideration which should give us pause before espousing any program linking religion and the public schools. I mention it because it has not been sufficiently emphasized. There are two great tasks before us under a way of life which like ours permits diversity of opinion and belief. We must

in the words of a significant slogan "keep America safe for differences." The presence of diverse religious groups is an expression of America at its most vital and characteristic. We must resist any effort overt or concealed to force unanimity of thought or creed upon us. Liberty, now as always, demands of us eternal vigilance for there are always forces and movements that seek such a right-of-way for their particular point-of-view as to threaten the free trade in ideas, and opinions which is at the core of the American promise. Enlightened Americans recognize the dangers of any type of regimentation, cultural, religious or political and are alert to oppose such threats to our freedom.

There is however an obverse side to this principle of diversity which must not be overlooked. If regimentation is the penalty for abandoning diversity, anarchy may result from a diversity unredeemed by unity. Diversity may lead to disintegration; difference may end in anarchy. The American way of life seeks to resolve in a creative and heroic manner this paradox of unity and diversity. While permitting full-play to religious and political differences, we seek simultaneously to maintain large areas of common experience, identification and inter-communication. Such common experiences give powerful cohesiveness to society in the very midst of diversity. Our common language, literature, social forms, political traditions, styles, sports, unite us in a community that easily supports the burden of our differences. It is here that the public school plays an insufficiently-appreciated role.

The public school provides for the children of America despite the multiple variety of ethnic origin, social and economic class, religious creed, a common denominator of shared background, influence, memories, experiences. Here in the formative years of childhood, our young meet and live as Americans and as members of the human race—namely in their most inclusive classification—rather than as Methodist, Catholic, Jew, white and Negro. To be sure there are minor incidents which reveal that children early in life may become the carriers of the bigotries

of their elders. By and large however the public school functions as the most significant symbol, next only to the government itself, of our large common shared life as undifferentiated Americans. Perhaps it is because I was born across the sea and my arrival to this country is linked in my mind with my first day in public school, that that experience has remained so prominent in my consciousness. Coming out of the "ghetto" of one group's life, inhabited exclusively by people of one's own faith with little opportunity to meet people outside of its limited boundaries I suddenly found myself seated among Irish, Negro and Polish children. The impress of that initial contact upon the receptive mind of a child has not waned during his years of adulthood. We should be profoundly jealous of the inclusive character of our public schools and shield it against any divisive "sectarian" influences. Dr. Freehof pointed out in the July-August 1948 issue of *Religious Education* that "all religious instruction is

bound to be 'sectarian.' This is psychologically inevitable whatever we deem philosophically possible." For even a cursory study of history will indicate that while ideas can be universal, institutions cannot. The universal can be seen by a Church or Synagogue only through the lenses ground by its particular experience, tradition and creed. The religious ideas that is hoped may become part of the educational process in our public schools, can enter only by way of a specific institution and through personnel trained in institutional loyalty and schooled in a "sectarian" interpretation. The risk is no less great because the intention is laudable.

Out of the very disillusionment that many religious educators feel, a new resolve can spring. It is out of the sphere of voluntary religious associations known as Churches and Synagogues that a consecrating spirit of justice, love, truth and morality can emerge to interpenetrate the life of the land.

66 • The Case for State Aid to Parochial Schools

Compulsory-attendance laws require a parent to send his child to school. The parent is not, however, required to send his child to the public school. The United States Supreme Court has ruled, under the Fourteenth Amendment, that a parent can educate his child in a private (nonstate) school or even in his own home. Many parents prefer, for religious and other reasons, to send their children to private or church schools rather than to the public schools. Nevertheless, they must continue to pay taxes to support the public schools even though they make no use of them. In addition, they must pay tuition fees to the private schools to which they send their children. For some parents who use the private schools, this dual support of public and private schools is a perennial source of discontent. They see no reason why they should be taxed to support the public schools when they do not use them. Of course, this is an old objection, one often raised—in the last century when the public schools were being established—by unmarried people and by married couples without children.

A more serious objection to the dual support of private and public schools rests

[From Reverend Cletus Healy, S.J., "Catholic and Public Schools," *The Catholic World*, 169 (Sept. 1949): 451-455. Reprinted by permission.]

on the assumption that the schools are either atheistic or at best neutral with respect to religion. For this reason a devout Catholic, so it is held, has no choice but to send his child to a parochial school and to accept the double financial burden thereby entailed. Such a Catholic is required not only to support his church school but also to support a school which ignores the most important thing for which he stands—namely, religion. This is an issue that requires careful consideration if the consequences of the various ways of dealing with it are to be appreciated. In the following discussion a member of the Catholic clergy, Father Cletus Healy, S.J., presents the issue boldly and without equivocation.

Since this is a democracy, and since the Government enters the field of education in virtue of its duty to "promote the general welfare," it is reasonable to expect that Federal aid to education should be extended to all and under conditions which are acceptable to all regardless of race, creed, or other circumstance. And being assistance for *education* it would seem that the only qualifications for receiving assistance should be educational.

However, if we consider what our Government has done in the field of education in the United States, we find that it has offered "assistance" with a vengeance. Not merely has it offered help that parents might educate their children, but it has built schools and set up a whole educational organization to run them. And in doing so it not only determines *that* parents educate their children but *how* they shall educate them.

The zeal of our departments of education to further the interests of education and to afford what they consider democratic opportunities for all is truly commendable. But the fact remains, and the point to be observed is that in offering this concrete, specific educational system, without alternatives, as *the* assistance offered by the Government, the Government far exceeds the bounds of mere assistance. It introduces unnecessary and, consequently, unfair conditions to the assistance; it so specifies the assistance that it either transgresses the right of the parents to determine their children's education or, by excluding those who cannot accede to the condi-

tions, it ceases to be conducive to the "general" welfare. It is both unjust and undemocratic.

If we restrict ourselves to surface considerations, it would appear that our educational system is sufficiently democratic, for it does offer an opportunity to all who want to take advantage of it.

But does offering the opportunity to "all who want" to use it necessarily insure its democracy? Once in pagan Rome a Christian church was surrounded and set on fire. "All who wanted" to offer incense to the pagan gods were "free" to come out of the burning structure. It is evident that their "freedom" to live was somewhat restricted, in spite of the apparent liberality of the offer.

If parents were allowed to send their children to public schools on condition that they subscribe to the principle: "God should be ignored," it would be more evident that the offer was not so democratic. However, Catholics are not asked to concede the principle that God should be ignored; they are just asked to ignore Him; they are offered the opportunity of having their children educated in institutions where God is, as a matter of fact, systematically ignored.

There are other ways of excluding Catholics than by posting a sign: "No Catholics Allowed"; the stipulation can be: "No Religion Allowed." The effect will be largely the same, but the responsibility for the exclusion seems to rest on the "narrow-minded" Catholics themselves. One sometimes hears of apartments offered for rent with "No Children Al-

lowed" clauses. Of course the intention is not to exclude parents; all they have to do is leave their children outside and come on in. All Catholics have to do is leave their religion outside and come in. But Catholics don't feel that they can leave their religion outside.

Moreover, the "freedom" to reject this public assistance leaves much to be desired. It corresponds roughly to the "freedom" I have to go speeding through town. The street is in good shape; the traffic is light; and my car will do eighty. I am free! But there is that slight difficulty of a fine that I might have to pay.

So, too, is the Catholic free to educate his own children; but for him the matter is somewhat different. He has already paid for his right of way in the public school system. To exercise his freedom to educate his own children will cost him considerably in excess of a speeding fine. And if he is in a district where there is no Catholic school, where is his freedom?

In the light of these facts, the liberality and the democracy of our present educational system is not so evident as superficial considerations might lead us to believe. In offering an irreligious education as the only assistance available, this system does violence to the consciences of Catholic parents. They are forced to accede to its unjust conditions of assistance under the expensive pain of exclusion from aid—if not from education.

The determination to exclude God from our public school system is so prejudicial to the consciences of Catholics as a whole that they have, with great sacrifice to themselves, established an independent school system of their own—and this over and above their share in the cost of the public school system. Why they have done so might not be understandable to the Liberal mind, but the fact that Catholics have established an independent school system large enough to accommodate nearly 3,000,000 students might at least induce a few of the Liberals to re-examine their contention that our public school system is not prejudicial to Catholics.

Meanwhile the injustice remains.

And superficially, at least, it appears that there will be even theological difficulties in eradicating it. If to ignore God is to be prejudicial to the more religiously minded, what would it be if God were not ignored! To speak of God at all one must assume some theology. To assume a Catholic theology is prejudicial to the sincere Protestant: to assume a Protestant theology is prejudicial to the Catholic; and to assume either is prejudicial to the devout atheist!

It is evident that any democratic solution to this problem will require that the Government either help all or help none. If it cannot offer its assistance without a qualification which excludes a significant sector of its citizens, it should stay out of the field—at least, it should not burden this excluded sector with the cost of the assistance from which it is excluded.

Of course the suggestion that the Government stay out of the field of education will sound ridiculous to some modern minds; but Catholics who have been accustomed to educating their own children receive the suggestion as being rather obvious.

However, it is not recommended that the Government leave the field. In virtue of its responsibility to promote the general welfare it is under obligation to assist where there is need. But its obligation is to promote the "general" welfare; and, consequently, to exclude the large Catholic fraction of the population by a religious stipulation (or anyone else by a non-educational stipulation) is to abandon its purpose and forsake its duty.

But even more fundamental than its obligation to be democratic in offering assistance is the Government's obligation to respect the rights of the parents. If fundamental human rights are not to be violated and if we are not to take a lamentable step in the direction of totalitarianism, the Government must respect the rights of the parents to determine the education of their children.

It is only by respecting these two principles, of social democracy and of personal justice, that a respectable solution to this problem can be derived.

On the other hand, it is only the unfounded assumption that democracy requires that all receive the same education that makes the solution to this school-State problem difficult. The assumption is absurd. Democracy requires that all receive assistance; but it does not require that all take shorthand, nor that all take a vocational agriculture course. Why, then, is it a violation of democracy if some are taught religion and not others?

And if some children can be educated in North High and others in West without violation of democracy, why would it be a violation of democracy to have Catholic children educated in one school, Protestants in others—as their parents wish? Or at least, where separate schools are not feasible, why could Catholic children not have Catholic teachers and Protestant children Protestant teachers? That Catholic children can be educated in Catholic schools without “lighting the fires of religious intolerance” (on the part of Catholics, at least) is sufficiently demonstrated by the existing Catholic school system.

It is strange that Catholics, who are supposed to be intolerant by nature, have little difficulty in realizing that to make our public school system Catholic would be prejudicial to Protestants and secularists alike; and, yet, those who profess to be champions of religious toleration and broadmindedness cannot see that a secular or Protestant school system is prejudicial to Catholics.

The very mention of assistance to Catholics gives rise to the Church-State ghost. Exponents of “religious toleration” complain vociferously that to help Catholic education is to help the Church. They fail to consider the fact that the children who come out of these “Churches” are educated. They obscure the fact that the parents who send their children to these schools have to pay for their Catholic schools, and not some abstract to-be-dreaded Church.

They distort the fact that the reason Catholic parents have to educate their own children is that the Government in offering *assistance* made irreligious stipulations in violation of their parental rights to determine

the education of their children. Finally, they ignore the fact that these Catholic parents have already been taxed for the purpose of educational assistance.

While they are guilty of grave oversight in these respects, these opponents of Catholic assistance do manifest a surprisingly great concern for their much revered “wall of separation” between Church and State. Their oversight might be forgiven were it not that they give the impression of being much more concerned for their unconstitutional “wall” than they do for either Church or State.

For in the first place, it is difficult to see how a truly religious mind could so zealously defend an irreligious educational system. On the other hand, it should be noted that the so-called “wall of separation” which they so stoutly defend is an extra-Constitutional find. Why they prefer this metaphor to the wording of the Constitution itself is perhaps because the obvious meaning of the Constitution is not at all favorable to their purpose.

Governmental assistance for religious education is supposed to be a violation of the First Amendment. It states: “Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” To one with even a meager understanding of our colonial history it is evident that this amendment was designed to prevent the Federal Government from “establishing” a religion according to the current understanding of the term, that is, from giving juridical preference to one religion over others.

As the second part of the Amendment was designed to prevent any direct violation of religious consciences, so the first part was designed to prevent any indirect violation of religious liberty by extending governmental favor to one religion to the exclusion of others.

Even a superficial appreciation of the religious sentiments of our people at the time this Amendment was passed—and the second part of the Amendment itself—makes it evident that there was no intention of putting religion in an unfavorable light. Rather it was

a profound concern for religion and an earnest desire to render its exercise free of all handicaps or coercion that motivated our ancestors to insist on this First of our Bill of Rights.

But with their "wall of separation" interpretation, the Liberal Protestants make of this Amendment an "establishment" of irreligion. Because of this "wall" the Government may have nothing to do with *any* religion. Instead of the Government holding all religions in an equally favorable light, it must hold all in an equally unfavorable light. It must restrict its favor to the atheists who do not believe in God, to secularists who do not care about God, and to indifferentists who are willing to ignore God. For these the Government may build and run schools; for these free textbooks may be secured; for their children transportation to and from school may be provided, as may free lunches and free health service. But for those who care too much about God to forget about Him, none of this.

So it is that Secularism is established. And this by the First of our Bill of Rights! What would James Madison who first presented this Amendment to Congress and who thought it "as well expressed as the nature of language would admit"—what would he have thought of this interpretation! Of course

Madison could never have foreseen that a sad day might come in which other language would be arbitrarily substituted for that of the Amendment.

Today a "wall of separation" is gradually being substituted for the Amendment we thought secured our "free exercise" of religion. Consequently, those who take their religion seriously enough to want to educate their children in a religious atmosphere are "free to exercise" their right by paying the very substantial fee, the cost of their own educational system.

In violation of justice, those who refuse to leave their religion outside are excluded from the solicitude of the Government which all others enjoy.

In violation of justice all parents are put under pressure to surrender to the Government sacred parental rights which they cannot in conscience surrender. And for those who do not yield to the pressure there is no restitution.

If this "wall of separation" must be adopted as the official interpretation of our First Amendment, we must conclude that governmental aid in the field of education cannot be democratic. And since the justification of our Government's entering the field of education is to promote the "general" welfare, it would seem that it has lost its justification.

67 • The Case Against State Aid to Parochial Schools

It is fitting to end this analysis of the relations which ought to obtain between church and school with a well-rounded and balanced presentation of the arguments for and against public support of parochial schools. John K. Norton, one of the foremost students of school administration, has brought together, in the following pages, the main points on each side. After reviewing the case pro and con, he concludes that the principle of separation of church and state, although not satisfactory to everyone, is nevertheless the best solution possible.

[From John K. Norton, "Church, State and Education," *Journal of the National Education Association*, 38 (Jan. 1949): 21-24. Reprinted by permission.]

What should be the relationships of church, state, and education? This is an age-old issue. It is still a burning question in many parts of the world today.

Our forebears, after a long period of conflict, seemed to have resolved this issue for the United States by the close of the Nineteenth Century.

Recognizing that a government of free men could exist only on a foundation of universal enlightenment, they made education a matter of public concern and provided for its control and support by all the people.

Influenced by the first amendment to the Constitution, and by considerations which had brought about its enactment, they eliminated sectarian, religious instruction from the public schools. Nonpublic schools were permitted, but only at private expense.

These American conceptions as to what the relationships of church, state, and education should be have recently been challenged. Demands are being made that sectarian, religious instruction be carried on under the auspices of the public schools and that denominational schools receive tax support.

It is necessary, therefore, that the American people again acquaint themselves with the issues raised by these demands.

This article is concerned primarily with the issue of whether public funds should be provided for denominational schools. It presents arguments both pro and con. Then it takes a position which is believed to be sound.

First, let us consider the arguments which are frequently made in favor of tax support for schools under the control of religious denominations.

First, some contend that public support for denominational schools is essential if a paramount element of life—the religious, spiritual, and ethical element—is to receive proper emphasis.

Recent history emphasizes the need for religious and ethical controls in the world to-

day. Two terrible world wars have occurred since 1914, and another one is threatened.

These wars are symptoms of a world-wide failure in the realm of religion and morality. They testify that man's control over material power has outrun his ethical controls.

Warfare on a world scale is only the most dramatic illustration of religious and ethical failure. Other examples abound in the internal affairs of nations and in family and individual life.

This situation, it is argued, requires that every effort should be made to strengthen institutions concerned with the propagation of religion, including provision of public support for denominationally controlled schools.

Second, it is contended by some that the religious and ethical element in life, so badly needed today, can be adequately brought into the educational undertaking only by religious denominations.

The viewpoint contends that education must have a unity including religious indoctrination, an accepted creed, specific theological interpretations of the supernatural and the hereafter, if it is to achieve adequate religious and ethical outcomes.

Education including this emphasis, it is contended, is impossible in public schools, and for a sizable portion of our population does not occur anywhere.

Public funds for denominational schools, it is urged, would be an important step toward correcting this situation.

Third, it is contended that public and non-sectarian schools are godless, and that they consciously or unwittingly encourage atheism or at best result in very tenuous religious belief.

This situation, it is urged, is responsible for a trend toward secularism, which, it is alleged, is at the root of many violations of religious and ethical action in national and individual life. This trend, it is contended, can be corrected only by organizing education under the auspices of denominational agencies which consciously indoctrinate their specific religious creeds.

Fourth, it is urged that proper religious in-

struction can be provided only by fully prepared and completely consecrated representatives of specific religious denominations.

Religious teaching is not only of paramount importance; it is one of the most difficult fields of instruction. Only those thoroughly and specifically prepared in the theology and beliefs of a particular denomination, it is contended, should carry on this instruction. Public funds would aid in providing a sufficient number of teachers prepared for this kind of teaching.

Fifth, it is contended that the right of parents to determine the education and religious instruction of their children is a fundamental one, and that failure to provide public funds for denominational schools is a partial denial of this right.

The relation between parent and child is one of the most sacred and fundamental of all life. The fulfillment of this relationship is now financially more difficult for parents who wish to send their children to denominational schools.

They must pay public-school taxes and must also support their denominational schools. This, it is urged, is equivalent to double taxation. Furthermore, it takes no account of the saving to taxpayers resulting from the maintenance of schools under religious support.

This whole situation, it is urged, should be corrected by appropriating public funds for denominational schools.

Sixth, it is contended that the denial of public funds to schools under denominational control is equivalent to classifying those who attend these schools as second-class citizens.

Denominational schools, it is stated, are as much in the public interest as public schools. They give instruction in all subjects and in addition provide religious indoctrination. Refusal of public support for these schools, it is urged, implies that their graduates are second-class citizens.

Seventh, it is contended that the lack of tax-support for denominational schools in some instances results in the denial of equal educational opportunity.

Adequate educational opportunity is im-

possible without adequate financial support. This is not available for some denominational schools, due to economic limitations of parents. Such parents must choose between sending their children to schools which they do not prefer or seeing their children denied opportunity.

II

Now, let us turn to arguments made in opposition to the appropriation of public funds for the support of denominational schools.

First, it is urged that the appropriation of public funds for denominational schools would be a long step toward breaking down the unique American policy of separation of church and state.

Separation of church and state, provided for in the first amendment to the Constitution, which now also applies to state as well as federal action, is a peculiarly American conception. This Amendment reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ."

The deep students of liberty, and of conditions which lead to despotism—such men as Jefferson and Madison who founded our nation—were convinced that separation of church and state was fundamental to human liberty and freedom.

The basis for their conviction was abundantly provided by centuries of European history and by our American colonial experience. Accordingly, as the Supreme Court has recently pointed out, the clause of the Constitution against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect "a wall of separation between church and state."

Can we say that the threats to liberty, and to what we have come to call the American way of life, are less today than when the founders of the republic wrote our great charter? Does recent history suggest that we should return to a policy of close alliance between church and state?

What is a combination of church and state, if the compelling of all men by the state to

pay taxes for denominational instruction is not?

Second, it is contended that the organization of American schools along denominational lines would make education a divisive rather than a unifying factor in our life and would tend to destroy the public school as an agency of understanding and reconciliation.

Our people come from diverse origins. Such diversity has historically led to misunderstanding, dissension, and even bloodshed. Witness the history of Europe, and Europe today. Witness India.

• Why have we in the United States avoided the more bitter fruits of diversity in cultural origin and backgrounds? One of the important reasons is the existence of the free public school.

One of the prime functions of this common school has been to bring about that degree of understanding essential to cooperative action and to getting along together. This has been accomplished to a notable extent, considering our diverse origins, but who can say that the job has been finished? Certainly not sufficiently so that we can safely adopt a form of educational organization which, in basic structure, fractionalizes and sectarianizes our population.

To organize our schools on denominational bases would be to split them up along the lines of one of our major cleavages—religion.

Third, the provision of public funds for denominational schools would place education under agencies which for centuries have tended to indoctrinate rather than to release the human mind.

The American people established their public schools for their own enlightenment—to prepare themselves for democratic self-government. The founding fathers recognized this paramount educational function repeatedly in their great state papers. The public schools may not have succeeded fully in this regard. However, we are still a democracy, and that is something in these days.

Would education do better if it were organized under denominational auspices? This seems unlikely. Organized religion has traditionally been a highly conservative force. Not

only in western culture, but thru-out the world it has frequently stood in the path of freedom of thought and scientific inquiry.

Even today rational study of some pressing problems of individual and group life is not infrequently opposed on the basis of ancient and outworn theological doctrines.

Here we are not concerned with the question of how far religious belief must inherently be based on immutable conceptions and a large element of faith achieved thru conscious indoctrination. Rather, the issue is how much can this emphasis permeate democratic education and still permit it to retain the spirit of freedom, of independent thought, and of an inquiring attitude toward life in its various phases—economic, political, and social—which are the *sine qua non* of education for democratic citizenship?

Fourth, it is contended that great religious and ethical conceptions are not the unique possession of denominational organizations and that these conceptions can be effectively communicated and are communicated by nondenominational agencies, such as public schools.

Noble religious and ethical conceptions have come from many sources. Tolerance, respect for the individual, integrity in dealing with one's associates, social responsibility, and ability to work together cooperatively, love of truth, reverence—here are great conceptions which belong to all mankind.

Such concepts are being put into action by many organizations and agencies which are wholly nonsectarian, of which the schools are one.

When a public school is not dealing with this area of life adequately, then the remedy is not to abolish, but to reform it, so that it does what good public schools do in this regard.

If teachers are not adequately prepared for this major educational responsibility, then the cure is to prepare them for it.

It is true that public schools cannot and should not provide sectarian, religious instruction—that associated with the special beliefs and theological conceptions of particular denominations. This is quite a different thing

from saying, however, that public schools are not concerned with spiritual and ethical values and spiritual and ethical action—and do not teach such values and action.

When one views the world today, where do we see the most stark examples of materialism, intolerance, hate, murder, and rapine? Is it where public schools exist organized along the lines of those in America?

It seems a fair conclusion that the moral shortcomings in the world today are fundamentally due to two factors: (1) the profoundly disturbing impact of science and technology on the affairs of men and (2) the failure of many agencies in our life, including organized religion, to show sufficient flexibility and dynamic leadership in translating religious conceptions into ethical action under the changing conditions existing in the world today.

Fifth, it is contended that it is not necessary to provide public support for denominational schools in order that children may have denominational religious indoctrination.

Children in public schools usually attend 200 days or less out of 365 in a year and but five or six hours of 24 each day. This leaves ample time for the teaching which every child should receive thru some religious denomination.

It is unfortunate that many parents do not provide religious instruction for their children. There are various steps that might be properly taken in our country to improve this situation. Certainly the various religious denominations have far from exhausted the possible lines of action in this regard. One of the steps which should not be taken is to bring the power of the state into the situation.

It is true that parents who send their children to denominational schools bear an additional financial burden. However, it is not an insuperable one. Public education costs about 2% of our national income. Those who wish to have their children attend denominational schools could presumably finance them from an equivalent 2% levy on their collective income. This would represent a total of approximately 4% of income—to cover both taxes for public schools and contributions for denominational schools. Is this an impossible

percentage of income for an item as important as education?

Sixth, it is urged that the present arrangements in the United States promote healthy growth on the part of our religious denominations.

A recent religious census reveals that 53% of the population holds church membership—the highest mark in the United States history. A total of 77,386,188 persons belong to some religious group. This is a gain of 3,713,006 since the last count.

The *Christian Herald* comments on these figures as follows: "These gains represent a respectable advance in religion in America. Religious faith in our land is not hitched to a skyrocket, but neither is it on the toboggan. Instead it is climbing gradually, steadily, surely. . . . Statistically speaking, religion in these United States is enjoying the most robust health it has ever known."

Does this situation suggest that we should pull down one of the supporting pillars of the Constitution of the United States and return to the combination of church and state from which the founders of the republic so wisely protected us?

Furthermore, it may be reasonably argued that few things would more likely result in infringements upon the freedom of religious organizations, and in reductions in their initiative and vitality, than to place them under public support. Many members of various denominations now oppose public funds for religious enterprises on this basis.

III

What should be our conclusions, then, as to how education should be organized and financed in the United States?

To this observer, it appears that present arrangements represent a wise and fair compromise of a question on which men differ markedly and on which no solution acceptable to all viewpoints has been evolved. What is the present arrangement?

First, it provides public education, which is considered by the great majority to be an indispensable state service, in nondenomina-

tional schools, free and open to all. In these schools the great majority of our future citizens learn to respect each other and to get along together in spite of diverse religious origins.

It would be a major error of American policy to fragmentize public education and to divide it up among various minority groups, whether along religious, economic, political, or social lines. To do so would convert education into an instrument for the indoctrination of special viewpoints and beliefs rather than one for developing the independent and cosmopolitan quality of mind required in citizens of a complex, industrial democracy. The present organization of public education is consistent with the latter purpose. It would be a tragic mistake to reorganize public education along the lines of our cleavages, whether religious or otherwise.

The *second* essential feature in present relations of church, state, and education guarantees the minority of parents, who do not

wish to send their children to the public school, the right to send them to a nonpublic school—either denominational or nonsectarian. This is far from an empty right, as the attendance of some three million children in nonpublic schools testifies. Thus, minority wishes are respected, as they should be in a free society.

This privilege, however, should not be financed at public expense. To do so would be a long step toward breaking down the wall of separation between church and state, which the founders of the republic so wisely erected.

Present arrangements, to be sure, do not satisfy the extremists. They do not satisfy the Ku-Kluxers and the others who would force all children into a public school regardless of the wishes of their parents.

They do not satisfy those who would have the people default in providing common-school systems whereby all citizens may be prepared for their cooperative and arduous duties in a society of free men.

SUMMARY

The controversy over whether or not religion is to become a part of the education of the individual at public expense takes two forms. The first of these is the question of whether or not to provide religious education in the public schools. If this question were answered affirmatively, courses would be introduced in which either the Christian religion or all the major religions would be studied just as history or literature is studied. Some advocates of this view would require that pupils, in addition to studying about religion, be impelled toward some religious faith as a way of life. Religious instruction would not necessarily require courses in religion, for religious ideas and interpretations could be made to permeate all instruction, and special courses would thereby be rendered unnecessary. Irrespective of how religion might be taught, whether in special courses or throughout the curriculum, the schools would still be publicly supported and controlled.

There are several objections to this point of view:

1. It violates the principle of separation of church and state as laid down in the First Amendment to the Constitution and reaffirmed by the United States Supreme Court.
2. It would not satisfy denominations that insist upon teaching their own faith and that faith alone. These denominations would continue to maintain their own schools. Their claim to public support would be stronger than it is now, for they could then use the argument that public money, being used to support religious instruction in the public schools, should in like measure be given to them.
3. This point of view assumes that moral character can be taught only if religion

is employed, and that the more explicit the religious element is, the more effective such instruction will be. There is enough evidence against this assumption to cast serious doubt upon it. The burden of proof would seem now to rest upon those who make the assumption.

The second form of the controversy is the question of whether or not public money should be appropriated to parochial schools. If money were appropriated for this purpose, it is assumed, the public schools would continue as they are now and the primary change would be that church schools would receive government support in whole or in part. Religion need not then be taught in the public schools, for anyone desiring his child to receive a religious education would be able to send him to a church school at little or no cost.

There are several objections to this point of view:

1. Like the first position, it violates the principle of separation of church and state. The state would be underwriting religion financially by using public money to promote religion through education.

2. This plan would encourage churches not now operating parochial schools to found such schools, since these churches would be able to receive public assistance for that purpose. In the long run, this tendency would divide the schools among the various denominations, resulting in the complete dissolution of the system of public education as it is now known. In its place would emerge a system of church schools.

3. There is an equal likelihood that the churches not now operating parochial schools would insist more emphatically than ever that religion be taught in all public schools. Their cause would be strengthened by the fact that the principle of separation would already have been breached.

4. This view, like the preceding one, assumes that religion is essential to the development of moral conduct and, in fact, goes further by asserting that it is essential to any proper education whatever. This assumption is open to serious objections in the light of historical and social facts.

The plan which the nation has worked out on the relation between religion and the public school is based upon the fundamental principle of separation of church and state and is essentially as follows:

1. Any church is free to establish and maintain schools, but it may not receive government money in support of them.

2. Any parent is free to send his child to a public school or to a church school or even to educate him at home. This is a matter for his personal decision. But he must in any event educate his child.

3. A public school can neither teach religion nor use its power as an arm of the

state to influence children to accept a religious faith. Religious belief is a private matter, and neither a state nor the federal government can force or influence anyone toward a religious faith. Religious education is the business of the church and the synagogue. It is not the business of the government.

4. The state can aid an individual who is attending a church school. It can provide him within certain limits with transportation, health services, and food. But this aid is service to the individual. It entails no financial aid to the school.

5. All questions of school-church relations are subject to decision of the courts if they are brought before the courts as cases.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. How is the controversy over the teaching of religion in the public schools related, if at all, to the cultural confusion and anxiety of the present era?

2. List the different opinions about how the school and religion should be related. Which of these, if any, do you accept? Why?

3. It is sometimes argued that religion is a significant part of the culture and that the growing generation should no more be denied the opportunity to learn about religion than about the economic and political aspects of the culture, which are far less important in life. How do opponents attempt to answer this argument?

4. State the main points of the argument in support of state aid to parochial schools. How do opponents of this argument reply to it?

5. It is sometimes asserted that democracy is based upon Christianity. Examine this assertion with a view to determining its historical accuracy and its international consequences for democracy.

6. In the light of all the information now at your command, what do you think is the best solution of the controversy over religion in the school?

1. For contrasting interpretations of the meaning of the American doctrine of separation of church and state as it applies to education, see R. Freeman Butts, *The American Tradition in Religion and Education*, and J. M. O'Neill, *Religion and Education Under the Constitution. The First Freedom* by Wilfred Parsons, S.J., contains a review—from a Roman Catholic point of view—of the recent court decisions bearing on this issue.

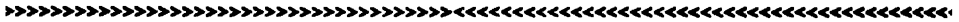
2. In his *University and the Modern World*, Arnold S. Nash, a Canadian who is a Protestant clergyman and scholar, offers a powerful argument for the thesis that education must be based on religion. Nash is writing specifically about higher education but his treatment of the subject is equally applicable to the secondary school. Conrad Henry Moehlman's *School and Church: The American Way* ably states the case against religious teaching in the public schools. Moehlman, a Baptist clergyman, was for many years a professor of the history of Christianity at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. His book *The Wall of Separation Between Church and State* is also pertinent to the issues in this chapter. *Religious Education*, the magazine of the Reli-

gious Education Association, contains a large number of articles bearing on various aspects of the problem of religion and education; most of them support, in one way or another, the view that religion should be taught in the public schools.

3. The Educational Policies Commission, *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools*, and the Seventh Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, *The Public Schools and Spiritual Values* (John S. Brubacher, ed.), explore at some length the role of the public schools in the development of moral and spiritual values. The Yearbook also contains two chapters, one by a Roman Catholic, William J. Sanders, and the other by a secularist, John L. Childs, which supplement the common statement prepared by the entire committee responsible for the yearbook.

CHAPTER TEN

Roots of Confusion and Conflict in American Beliefs



No society can function with stability for long unless its members share some important beliefs about matters of basic and common concern. Among these matters of common concern are, of course, the rights of property; the form, prerogatives, and limitations of government; the relations of one's own state to other states; the exercise of religious observances and practices; and the rearing of children, both in families and in schools. There are, no doubt, other matters of deep common concern in all societies. And, certainly, there are other matters which quicken and focus the common attention and anxiety of specific societies from time to time. But a society in which all members share common beliefs (along with patterns of practice more or less consistent with these beliefs) about property rights, government, international relations, religious rights and privileges, and childrearing is bound to be a stable society. And a society which presents to its members conflicting alternatives with respect to these matters is to some extent an unstable society.

Instability in a society is, of course, not necessarily a bad thing. It is only through instability that change occurs. And, although all change is not good, improvement or progress requires change. Hence, any progressive society is marked from time to time by instabilities. Its members face alternatives (confusions and conflicts) in belief with respect to important matters of social practice. As these confusions and conflicts are

resolved, one way or another, change, and perhaps progress, occurs. Instability becomes critical only as conflicts and confusions replace traditional, universally held beliefs and practices more rapidly than common beliefs can be revised and reconstructed. A society which faces an accumulation of important alternatives—alternatives that compel major readjustments in social beliefs and practices on the part of its members—may be said to be a society in transition from one major system of order to another.

LIFE IN AN ERA OF TRANSITION

The dangers of a transitional era are that members of a society, grown weary and fearful of instability, confusion, and conflict, will support attempts to restore traditional common beliefs in areas of confusion and conflict (or to impose new common beliefs) by forceful means. This requires, of course, the suppression or decimation of dissenting individuals and groups and the willful constriction or silencing of the debate and discussion, in schools and in other forums, through which the confusions and conflicts might have been rationally and peaceably resolved. Totalitarian regimes, communist or fascist, represent attempts to deal with the problems of a transitional era in some such way, by a concerted attempt to impose community of belief and practice, where it has been lost, by forceful means.

The promise of a transitional era lies, as we have suggested, in the opportunity which it presents for social progress and improvement. If processes of thoughtful study, debate, and discussion can be fostered and encouraged in schools and in other forums and channeled toward the clarification and resolution of important social confusions and conflicts, this hope of progress and improvement may be realized. Such, at least, is the democratic hope.

This hope will not be realized, however, unless people in the society recognize clearly and accept fully the fact that they are living through an era of transition and unless they learn to deal constructively and creatively with the confusions and conflicts of belief which such an era always presents. This recognition is especially important for educators if schools are to play any significant part in transmuting conflict into progress.

It is doubtful that most Americans, including American teachers, realize fully that they are now living in and through an era of transition. In earlier chapters of this book, evidence and aspects of the transitional character of our society have been pointed out. We have noted the decline of the traditional local community as an object of central identification and allegiance and its replacement, in the lives of people, by special-interest groups with differing and sometimes conflicting conceptions of public and social welfare. We have noted that the family pattern is changing, that there is in contemporary America no one universally accepted pattern of family organization or of family responsibility for bringing up children. We have seen the evidence of social class divisions in our society and the differing beliefs about man and society which these divisions tend to develop within their members. We have faced the basic alternatives which the elimination or

non-elimination of racial segregation and caste now presents to our democratic society. We have recognized that widely differing welfare levels among our people place severe strains upon our common professions of democracy and social justice, both within and outside the schools. We have also noted the conflict now present in our society concerning the relationships between churches and the public schools and the place of religious instruction, if any, in the public-school program. All of these may be seen as evidence underlining the transitional character of American society at the present time.

On the other hand, we have emphasized "democracy" as the most widely shared tradition among the American people. In the common beliefs of democracy we as a people may hope to find the stability to deal constructively and creatively with the confusions and conflicts that confront us and the common will to oppose authoritarian attempts, internal or external, to impose standardized beliefs and practices upon us. But "democracy" does not mean the same thing to all Americans. The democratic tradition, too, presents confusions and conflicts at the present time. These further emphasize the fact that ours is a society in transition.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TRANSITION

What does full acceptance of the transitional character of our society mean? It means, first of all, the realization that many of the beliefs and ideas we use in thinking about our society were formed in relation to conditions of living that no longer exist. The mere longevity of an idea by no means proves or disproves its contemporary relevance or validity. Traditional ideas need to be rethought in relation to conditions which have changed in greater or less degree since the ideas were first formulated. Only by such rethinking can the contemporary relevance and validity of an idea be tested. The assumption that traditional ideas require no re-examination or criticism even when they have been challenged, when they have come to be seen as alternatives by men of good will, has been called a "vicious assumption" by Professor A. N. Whitehead. It is this "vicious assumption" that those who fully accept the transitional character of our society must learn not to make.

The conditions of life under which men and women live and make a living, under which boys and girls attempt to grow to maturity, have been radically transformed by the forces of science and technology. The slowly changing conditions of agrarian life, under which the patterns of human relationship, the moral and political ideas and institutions, the notions and practices of property, and the doctrines and practices of education characteristic of Western civilization were shaped have been rapidly replaced by an industrialized and urbanized environment. And the same forces, through science and technology, are still active in transforming and retransforming the environment in which human life must go on and in expanding man's power to build or to destroy.

Men and groups of men have literally to re-educate themselves—often basically—or perish. No major institution or ideology is exempt from the processes of change and

reconstruction now under way. And the institutions and ideologies of education and schooling are no exception to this rule.

If the acceptance of the transitional character of our society means, first of all, a weeding out from our thinking of dogmatic defenses of traditional beliefs, it means, in the second place, avoiding provincialism in our attitudes toward social problems and alternatives. The same forces which have industrialized our environment have bound the world into a pattern of interdependence. The same division of labor which makes human interdependence a fact and cooperation an urgent demand diversifies the experiences and interests of men and makes communication, which is essential to cooperation and re-education, difficult and sometimes impossible. Impelled to cooperation by increasing interdependence, men confront one another across barriers of specialized occupation, class, creed, race, and nation, with puzzled misunderstanding at best and brutal struggle at worst.

The conditions of struggle and conflict *within* Western civilization are further complicated by the necessity for men of "the West" to achieve working relationships with men of "the East." West confronts East, industrial societies confront agrarian and pre-agrarian societies, in a shrunken world. The provincial assumption that even the criticized and examined traditions of the West are "true" and "right" without question—and the educating of children to this effect—hardly lays a foundation for ultimate cooperation between East and West.

The philosopher F. S. C. Northrop has made this point with great force:

The East and the West are meeting and merging. . . . This is by no means an easy or a perfectly safe undertaking. . . . Neither war nor the peacetime problems of our world can be diagnosed as a simple issue between the good and the bad. . . . The very number and diversity of conceptions of what the good and the divine is give the lie to any such diagnosis, and to the ever present proposal that a return to traditional morality and religion is a cure for our ills. All that such proposals accomplish is the return of each person, and religious denomination, each political group or nation to its own pet traditional doctrine. And since this doctrine (or the sentiments which it has conditioned) varies at essential points from person to person, group to group, nation to nation, and East to West, this emphasis upon traditional religion and morality generates conflicts and thus intensifies rather than solves our problems. This in fact is the basic paradox of our time: our religion, our morality, and our "sound" economic and political theory tend to destroy the state of affairs they aim to achieve.¹

All peoples must, of course, work out of the framework of their own traditional meanings. But men may hold these subjects to alteration and improvement as they interact with other traditional meanings and as some novel synthesis of meaning is achieved. To hold and to teach that "Western" or "American" or "middle-class" conceptions and

¹ F. S. C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West*, Macmillan, 1946, pp. 4, 5, 6.

patterns of "reason" and "good" are universally "true" prior to their sustained interaction with alternative conceptions and patterns is hardly to accept the transitional character of the historical period in which we are living or to promote the growth of cooperative understanding between ourselves and those who "reason" differently.

To accept the transitional character of contemporary society is to seek to diagnose the factors which have given it this transitional character and to explore objectively, without dogmatism or provincialism, the major issues and alternatives which confront us in our period of transition. It is this function which the selections that comprise this chapter have been chosen to serve. Science and technology have already been named as general factors which have transformed the conditions of contemporary living and are continuing to transform them. More specifically, how has the influence of these general factors operated and how has it permeated the relationships of contemporary men, socially, economically and politically? And what profound issues and alternatives do the transformed conditions of living present to us who are now living in these conditions as adults and to those we teach? These are the questions which the selections of this chapter seek to answer.

In Selection 68, Counts traces the technological revolution through which America has passed and is passing and points up the human consequences, social and personal, of this revolution. In Selection 69, Berle and Means describe the growth of the corporation as a major feature of our economic life in industry and business and trace the profound effects of the corporation in changing the nature and meaning of property and ownership in our society. In Selection 70, Wilson suggests how relations between men in their life of work, and increasingly in other aspects of life, have been depersonalized.

Selections 71-74, taken together, clarify one of the profound unsettled issues of our time. Hayek argues that our drift away from competitive individual enterprise in our economic life and toward increased political control and planning leads inevitably toward the loss of all our traditional freedoms and that this drift can and should be checked. Becker argues, on the contrary, that the increasing intervention of government in the control of our economic life has been inevitable under conditions of increasing interdependence and that the only intelligible choice now open to us is between differing kinds of government intervention and control. In Selection 73, the National Association of Manufacturers defends economic individualism as a pattern of economic enterprise, and, in Selection 74, Bishop Haas challenges in the name of social justice and democracy the doctrine and practice of economic individualism.

The last three selections, taken together, discuss another of the grave unsettled issues of our day. Wright offers an objective estimate of the probable consequences, in terms of peace and war, of the various international policies America might now pursue. Borah and Becker argue that the unabated strength of contemporary nationalism makes internationalism an impossible, and for Borah, at least, an undesirable, option in international affairs. Meyer offers a case for moving from a regime of national sovereignties toward a federal world organization.

68 • The Impact of Technological Change

The story of man's increasing ability to manipulate and control the materials, energies, and processes of nature is a proud story. There have been resistances in modern history to the use of this increased power, when men have become appalled by the immediate effects of some new technique upon their own interests and welfare. The efforts of English textile workers to destroy the machines which threatened to put them out of work, the purchase and suppression of patents by corporate management when the patented devices threaten existing investments, public pleas for a moratorium on nuclear research and development as the threat of atomic war has loomed large—these are examples of resistance to the accumulating techniques by which man can control his environment—to the growth of technology. But, for the most part, modern men—and especially Americans—have been proud of the achievements of applied science and of technological invention.

But in other areas of our life we accept and apply quite different standards of progress—if, indeed, we admit that progress is possible at all. A political constitution is valued because it is old, because the founding fathers promulgated it. Suggested innovations, even when based on careful studies of its functioning and effects, are resisted as radical and impious. Our moral principles tend to be validated by their age and pedigree rather than by the applied intelligence that has gone into their formulation or by their fitness to the functions of life they purport to order and control. Similarly, our religious notions and practices tend to be judged sound or unsound by their origins rather than by their consequences in human life.

Modern men are distinctly of divided minds in the standards of judgment they apply to their beliefs about different features of their experience and culture. Accept the results of study, research, experimentation on the one hand; deny the relevance of study, research, and experimentation and affirm traditional authority on the other. As technology and science have grown in scope and power and as the conditions they have created have demanded innovations in political, moral, and religious outlooks, the gap between the two mentalities we carry around with us has widened. And as the mental gap has widened, the inconsistencies between parts of our culture have grown.

Perhaps one reason for our split mentality is the lack of widespread study of the human effects of technology and of the human processes by which technology has been developed and improved. We tend to isolate the invention both from the human aspirations and the basic scientific ideas and discoveries which underlie its development and from all its effects, good and bad, upon human living—upon relationships, values, attitudes, and ideas as well as upon external behavior. When technology is studied in

[From George S. Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952, pp. 141, 127-131, 136-139, 142-144, 146-150, 159, 166-167, 185-186. Reprinted by permission. Some footnotes omitted.]

isolation from its human origins and its human effects, it is literally dehumanized. And so it does not come to be seen along with and in relation to the "humanistic" features of our life—our politics, our morality, our arts, and our religion. The gap in our mentalities is thus defended and maintained.

The treatment of technology that follows is a humanized account. Its author, George S. Counts, is professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and one of the leading educational sociologists and statesmen of our time. His imaginative treatment of technology places it within its human context; its human origins as well as its human effects are assessed.

The importance of changes in the ways men produce and exchange the goods and services on which life depends can scarcely be over-emphasized. One need not accept a crude materialistic interpretation of history to recognize the great role of economic forces in human affairs. Social relations are always profoundly molded by the existing modes of livelihood.

* * *

The peoples of the world today are leaving behind the material forms and agencies of a civilization which in its broad outlines endured for many centuries. This civilization was based on agriculture, animal breeding, handicraft, simple trade, and human energy—a civilization that in its many variants dates practically from the beginning of recorded history. The civilization which our fathers and mothers brought to this continent in the first half of the seventeenth century and molded into a special pattern during the succeeding two hundred years was one of those variants.

We can see clearly that during the last several generations this early civilization of ours has been undergoing a process of profound change and transformation. Today its material foundations are only a memory. Gone are the simple tools with which the versatile farmer tilled his soil, harvested his crops, prepared his food, fashioned his garments, made his utensils, and erected his houses and barns. Gone are the great distances, the dirt roads and trails, the rude carts and sledges, the

rafts, flatboats, and sailing ships. Gone are the self-contained rural households and closely knit neighborhoods. Gone also in relative measure are the oxen, horses, and water-wheels, the long years of unrelieved human toil. Gone too in like measure are the local markets, the little stores and shops with their limited wares and services. Gone for most of us is the intimate relation with the elements—with soil, stream, and forest, with wind, rain, and snow, with sun, moon, and stars. So swiftly have these material features of our old agrarian civilization passed away that Lincoln, Grant, and even Cleveland would feel bewildered in the America of today. Indeed many members of the older generation now living experience a sense of bewilderment. And for the most part those of younger years who may feel at home in this new world really do not realize what kind of a world it is. They have experienced no other.

* * *

The uneven advance of industrial civilization, the swift transformation of the material foundations of life and the lag in institutional, ideological, and moral adjustment, have generated the terrifying crises, the wars and depressions, the revolutions and counterrevolutions, of our time. Our world, in both its domestic and its international aspects, is out-of-joint. Our practical inventiveness, in the words of Stanley Casson, has far outrun our "moral consciousness and social organization." We have one foot in a civilization that

is passing away, the other in a civilization that is only beginning to take form. Or to phrase the dilemma more aptly perhaps, as our feet tread the earth of a new world our heads continue to dwell in a world that is gone.

Industrial Civilization Releases Science and Technology

Science has rightly been called, as we have noted, the most powerful force moving in the modern world. As a method of inquiry, it is man's most reliable source of knowledge about both his environment and himself. Experimental in temper and scornful alike of both sacred tradition and temporal authority, it has moved triumphantly during the past four and a half centuries from conquest to conquest. Beginning its revolutionary career in the sphere of astronomy, it has left its mark on every field of thought. It has penetrated to some degree, though by no means equally, all departments of life and overthrown countless ideas and customs hallowed by time.

The most distinctive and profound characteristic of industrial civilization is its attitude toward science. Although there is no place in the world today where the advance of science in certain fields is not blocked by fear or vested rights, our contemporary civilization is the first in history to promote scientific inquiry on a large scale and make eager use of many of its findings. In its turn, of course, science has reacted upon civilization and molded with great power man's ways of life and his outlook upon the world. It has pushed its inquiries into the farthestmost limits of the universe and the innermost structure of the atom, into the origins of the earth and the succession of geological ages, into the evolution of living forms and the closely guarded mysteries of the cell, into the emergence of man, the rise and fall of social systems, the growth and decay of civilizations, and the nature of mind.

In its practical aspects, in its application to the technics of living and making a living, to the modes of livelihood, the forms of communication, the ways of waging war, the con-

trol of the life process, science is coming to be called technology. To the ordinary citizen it is this practical aspect of science that is the most striking feature of the age. Indeed, during recent generations a veritable technological revolution has swept over a large part of the world—a revolution that has brought to the astonished gaze of mankind one wonder after another and again and again made truth far stranger than fiction. So enraptured by technological advance have we become that we have tended to conceive human progress largely in its terms. We are learning today, to our sorrow, that this advance, when not accompanied by equally profound reconstruction in the realms of understanding and value, of customs and institutions, of attitudes and loyalties, can bring trouble and disaster.

* * *

The technological revolution is revealed in its most obvious and spectacular form in the march of mechanical invention. Beginning with the invention of the reciprocating steam engine by James Watt in 1765 and the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1793, the devising of new machines and processes gradually established itself as a cultural pattern. By the close of the nineteenth century it had assumed the proportions of a great and rising flood. This story is told in the unsentimental language of statistics by the United States Patent Office. The total number of patents issued increased from 2425 for the five-year period ending in 1845 to 180,984 for the similar period closing just one hundred years later. And the end is not yet.

* * *

Technology Has Brought the Power-Driven Machine

It has displaced the simple hand tool of early America by mechanical giants which dwarf the physical powers of men. So overwhelming and impressive has been this trend that our age has commonly been called the machine age; and Clark Wissler has included the machine among the three distinctive characteristics of our culture. If we should sud-

denly lose our capacity to make and use power-driven machines, our entire civilization would collapse and millions would be consigned to starvation.

* * *

The changes which were destined to transform man's modes of livelihood throughout the world began in England in the middle of the eighteenth century in the iron, textile, and pottery industries. Here the power of steam was released and harnessed to machines with revolutionary consequences. It made England the first industrial nation and contributed mightily to the creation of the greatest empire of all times. This little island became the workshop of the world. But despite efforts to hold the new modes of production in their original home, they migrated swiftly to America and of course to other countries. Also they moved from one branch of the economy to another until all industry was brought under their sway. As the decades passed, iron gave way to steel and other metals, steam was supplemented by gasoline and electricity, and machines ever more complicated, precise, and powerful were contrived. Today we stand on the threshold of the age of atomic energy and automatic factories.

For the most part this entire transformation went forward under a regime of private enterprise. To be sure, government, through tariffs, subsidies, and concessions, through guarantees of property rights and enforcement of contractual obligations, made an indispensable contribution. But it was the class of businessmen emerging from the Middle Ages as artisans, merchants, tradesmen, and bankers that played the central and active role. Motivated by the desire for private gain, these men organized production, as well as exchange, and assembled resources for the launching of the machine on its spectacular career and for the perfecting of its operations. Whatever their faults and whatever their future, they provided the initiative, the daring, and the leadership for the most profound modification of the modes of livelihood in history. They supplied the necessary energizing principle for the advance of technology.

Technology Has Profoundly Changed the Role of Human Labor in the Process of Production

The power-driven machine obviously alters the function and the responsibility of the workman. No longer does he act directly on raw materials and, proceeding at his own tempo, shape them into a finished product stamped with his own personality. Rather, following the pace set by the total productive process, he becomes a tender of machines, a stoker of furnaces, an oiler of wheels, a manipulator of levers, a presser of buttons, a feeder of materials, a coordinator of operations, and a receiver of finished products. Though the operation as a whole is an expression of the creative genius of the engineer, the ordinary workman tends to become an ever more highly specialized automaton—one of many coordinated human appendages of the machine.

But as technology advances and the miraculous resources of electronics and electrochemistry are brought into the service of the economy, the role of human labor is reduced more and more and man is pushed further and further toward the periphery of operations. First, a single machine becomes automatic, then a machine is designed to control a series or group of machines, and finally the entire process from raw material to finished product is made automatic in an automatic factory. This trend of course is still in its infancy, but it would seem that eventually any operation or series of operations susceptible of expression in mathematical formulas will be handed over to the machine. The perspectives now opening before *homo faber* leave the student of the history of human toil breathless.

* * *

The advance of the machine has been attended by a steady and rapid increase in the productivity of labor. Although this increase was particularly striking in the early stages of industrialization, it has continued with unabated strength down to the present time. According to J. Frederic Dewhurst, during the ninety-year period from 1850 to 1940 the esti-

mated productivity per man-hour of labor for the entire gainfully employed population in terms of 1940 prices rose from 17.3 to 79.3 cents. This means that the "average rate of increase over the entire period" was "18.2 per cent per decade, or about 1.7 per cent per year compounded."¹ These figures probably record the most impressive sustained economic advance in the history of nations.

The increase in the productivity of labor has been accompanied by a revolutionary reduction in the hours of work. What these hours were in the self-sustaining rural household of 1800 we can only conjecture, but they were probably between eighty and ninety per week. On the basis of available data, Dewhurst concludes that in 1850, for agricultural and nonagricultural occupations combined, the figure was 70.6. In the decades that followed, the 12-hour day gave way to the 10-hour day, which in turn was superseded by the 8-hour day. By 1940 the average work-week was 43 hours.

* * *

*Technology Has Brought Mass
Production and Enlarged the
Scale of Operations*

* * *

The idea of mass production appears early in the history of American industry. In 1799 Eli Whitney contracted with the federal government to deliver within two years ten thousand muskets. Although he required ten years to fill the order and thus failed to meet the conditions of his contract, he introduced into industry the revolutionary principle of "interchangeable parts" and the revolutionary ideal of "absolute accuracy." This achievement, combined with the invention of the assembly line which apparently came later, laid the foundations of mass production and material abundance. But before this mode of industrial operation could be applied to the commodities of popular use, the market had to be greatly extended, the scale of operations enlarged, and

mass purchasing power created. In time, with the steady and radical improvement of the means of communication and transportation, all of these conditions emerged.

* * *

The enlargement of the scale of operations was accompanied by a profound transformation in the conduct of the economy. It brought together in a single plant tens, scores, hundreds, and even thousands of workmen, each of whom performs a highly specialized function without knowing much about the total process. Indeed, the individual becomes a kind of interchangeable human part which with other parts compose the whole. While all of these developments have resulted in greatly increased efficiency, they have introduced into the economy a high degree of discipline and regimentation. The workman is required not only to begin and end his day by the clock; he is also expected to adjust all of his actions to the actions of his fellows and to the demands of the machine. The transformation of the independent and manysided farmer into an operative in a mass-production plant is one of the most revolutionary changes in our history. Jefferson's glorified tillers of the soil would doubtless have regarded this entire process as profoundly contrary to the "American way of life," as it assuredly was in their day. The problem thus created of giving to the common man, the workingman, a sense of social status and dignity is one of the major problems of our democracy. It goes to the root of much of the popular unrest of our time.

Large-scale operations have brought together, not only the labor power of many persons, but also the financial resources of many investors. As a consequence, the corporation, which scarcely existed at the time of the founding of the Republic, has come to dominate the economy of the nation. It is difficult to realize that "up to 1830 apparently only two industrial corporations in the United States had received charters authorizing a capital subscription of as much as a million dollars."² Moreover, mo-

¹ J. Frederic Dewhurst and Associates, *America's Needs and Resources* (New York, 1947), p. 23.

² George W. Stocking and Myron W. Watkins, *Monopoly and Free Enterprise* (New York, 1951), p. 18.

tivated by the desire for profits, the corporation has striven within the sphere of its interest to achieve a condition of monopoly. The degree to which the forces of competition have been circumvented is clearly revealed in an exhaustive study by a Congressional committee. "The major categories of business activity," says a report of this committee, "may be divided roughly into two groups. The first of these groups includes agriculture, wholesale and retail distribution, personal service, building construction, and a miscellany of smaller trades. The second includes transportation, public utilities, manufacturing, mining, and finance. In the first group business enterprises are numerous, the typical enterprise is small, the degree of concentration is low, and prices are relatively flexible. In the second, enterprises are less numerous, the typical enterprise is larger, the degree of concentration is higher, and prices are relatively rigid. Among the industries in the first group, it is probable that competition is more usual than monopoly. Among those in the second, it is possible that monopoly is as usual as competition."³ Our giant corporations, our great monopolies and quasi-monopolies, because they represent concentrated power, have a disproportionate influence in the economy.

Mass production and large-scale enterprise have favored and even compelled the development of a new science and a new profession—the science and profession of management. The complex and far-flung undertakings of our economy, with their highly technical and intricate operations and their hundreds and thousands of personnel, do not run themselves.

* * *

We are bound together by the indissoluble ties of economic forces. No family, no neighborhood, no state, no region can live by itself. As the workmen of a great factory pursue their many specialties, all of which are necessary to make the finished product, so the different parts of the country contribute their

special talents and resources to achieve the welfare of the whole. Technology has written for our people a declaration of economic interdependence that neither laws nor force can successfully subvert. As manufacture is dependent on agriculture, so agriculture is dependent on manufacture; as the West is dependent on the East, so the East is dependent on the West. The thread of a common interest runs through all the industries and regions of the country. And millions of us earn our living by providing the communication services that make us all of one family. So complete and pervasive is our interdependence that either fortune or misfortune arising in one sector of the economy sends its reverberations swiftly throughout the entire structure.

* * *

*Technology Has Created a Social Fabric
of Surpassing Sweep, Complexity,
and Dynamism*

In its patterns of organization industrial society is coming to resemble one of its own great machines, with its thousands of separate parts each performing an essential function and articulating with the others in closest harmony. To perceive all of the relationships between workman and workman, labor and management, farm and factory, region and region, industry and commerce, production and distribution, economy and government, work and play, is beyond the powers of a single mind. Even to follow the system of communication through all of its ramifications from the great centers of finance and power down to field and forest and stream, to mine and lathe and fishing boat, and back again, exhausts the imagination. When we add the interplay of social forces, of the hopes and fears and plans of people, of the designs and struggles of organized groups, of corporations, employers, farmers, labor unions, and cooperatives, we confront a condition that would have astonished and frightened the simple farmers and tradesmen of a few generations ago.

This vast system of relationships seems to be extremely sensitive and unstable. Unlike

³ Temporary National Economic Committee, Monograph No. 21, *Competition and Monopoly in American Industry* (Washington, 1940), pp. 307-308.

our old agrarian society, with its independent and quasi-independent neighborhoods, industrial society constitutes a single social fabric and is vulnerable as a whole. If it fails to function in any one of many of its innumerable parts, if the outlay for capital goods falls below the danger point, if speculation upsets the delicate financial balance, if purchasing power is insufficient to absorb the goods and services available, it may pass into a condition of general paralysis or crisis—loans are called, shops close their doors, wheels of production stop turning, millions of workmen are thrown on the streets, members of the middle classes consume their savings, farmers endeavor to resurrect the self-contained household of their ancestors, young men and women hesitate to marry and assume the responsibilities of parenthood, and all elements of the population become frightened and seek scapegoats for their troubles. This seems to be what happens when a great economic depression sweeps over the land.

• • •

A New Cultural Element Changes the Character of Both a Civilization and a People

The introduction of such an element is a serious business. It does not mean merely an addition to elements already present. A culture is much more than an aggregation of distinguishable elements. It is essentially a system of functional relationships in which the diverse constituents are bound together into a kind of organic unity. A new element therefore will affect eventually, according to its strength, the entire system of relationships. And this means that it will change the character of the people nurtured by the given culture or civilization. Horace Bushnell saw all this clearly in the middle of the last century. "This transition from mother and daughter power to war and steam-power is a great one," he wrote, "greater by far than many have as yet begun to conceive—one that is to carry with it a complete revolution of domestic life and social manners."⁴

⁴ Horace Bushnell, "The Age of Homespun," in *Work and Play* (New York, 1864), p. 376.

A new element may merely enrich or perfect a civilization without modifying its configuration or shifting its tendencies. But it may, depending on its nature, give a new direction to cultural evolution or even profoundly disrupt the most basic institutions of a society. The coming of agriculture to a nomadic people changes in the course of time the whole way of life, undermines certain cultural traits, and compels the growth of others. The introduction of the horse among the Indians of the great plains of North America altered the modes of livelihood, the methods of warfare, and the character of the dwellings. The invention of firearms assisted in the destruction of the feudal social structure of Europe and gave the people of the West an overwhelming advantage in their struggle to occupy the earth. The compass made possible the discovery and settlement of the New World and placed England, previously on the borders of European civilization, in a strategic and favored position. The airplane changes the relations of nations and may convert certain regions, such as the Hudson Bay littoral and northern Russia, now remote from the highways of commerce, into centers of traffic between East and West. The prohibition of ceremonial head-hunting among peoples of the South Seas, according to one investigator, weakened their interest in life and led to rapid depopulation. And if slaves once get the idea of freedom, they will never be the same again.

The introduction of a new cultural element inaugurates a process of interaction. On the one hand, the new element impresses its special character on the culture. The cow, for example, because of its peculiar nature, will call forth appropriate cultural traits; the horse, for similar reasons, will call forth others. On the other hand, the culture will impress its special character on the new element. In one culture, the cow will be developed into a beast of burden, in another into a producer of milk, in another into a source of beef, and in still another into an object of worship. It is the same in the case of the horse. The Arabs developed a beast of great agility and swiftness, whereas the warriors of mediaeval Europe, clothed in heavy armor, evolved the powerful

Belgian, Clydesdale, and Percheron breeds. So technology, while bringing the peoples of the world into ever closer relations, will take different forms and be directed toward different ends in different civilizations.

*Technology Is Changing the Character
of Both Our Civilization and
Ourselves*

Most obviously technology transforms the material aspects of our civilization—our dwellings, our tools of production, our weapons of warfare, our instruments of communication, and even our landscape. But it must never be forgotten that the people who live in the new physical setting and use the new physical agencies are themselves changed. The new conditions call forth new habits, new powers, and new attitudes, new values, new conceptions of life, new hopes and fears. The man with the tractor is not the man with the hoe, even though developed from the same germ cells. The people of the Tennessee Valley today are not the people of fifteen years ago, even though we were to assume neither births nor deaths, neither immigration nor emigration. The little man with the revolver is not the same as the little man with the club. A nation or a world with the jet plane or the atomic bomb is something new under the sun. And a people possessing technology with all of its revolutionary possibilities opens a new epoch in the history of mankind.

These changes which technology has brought in the realm of physical means and agencies give rise to tensions between the new and the old elements of the civilization. Thus the power-driven machine changes the status of the workman, takes the woman out of the home, encourages the growth of the factory, and modifies the system of property relations. The building of a highway or the invention of the automobile stimulates exchange, widens the scope of the market, loosens family and neighborhood ties, and weakens age-old forces of social control. The development of the machine gun, the tank, and the airplane removes military power from the hands of

the people, makes impossible popular revolutions on the eighteenth century model, and places democracies everywhere under the peril of dictatorship. The point to be emphasized is that changes in such a humble sphere as the tools for producing goods will affect sooner or later the entire civilization from bottom to top and from center to circumference. Until adjustments are achieved in economic institutions, social structure, education, government, and even religion and morals, the civilization will be in a state of disharmony and crisis.

* * *

*We Enter the Atomic Age with Minds
Formed Largely in the Day of the
Hoe, the Horse, the Spinning
Wheel, and the Sailing Ship*

The fact must be emphasized repeatedly that the strange industrial civilization which has burst upon mankind so suddenly and which is sweeping across the world so swiftly is still in its early stages, even in America. In certain of its phases it is far more advanced than in others. Our functional ideas, moral conceptions, and social organization lag seriously behind our modes of livelihood, forms of communication, use of mechanical energy, and scientific knowledge. This lag is doubtless responsible for many of the troubles and conflicts of the time. It is certainly the underlying source of the more powerful and disrupting tensions to be observed both within our American society and among the nations of the world. Today a great gulf stands between many of the stubborn realities of our industrial civilization and our customs, loyalties, understandings, and outlooks—between our closely integrated economy and our competitive spirit, between our shrunken world and our tradition of isolation, between our knowledge in almost every field and our ways of life. The task of bringing our minds and our practices into harmony with the physical conditions of the new age is a gigantic and urgent educational undertaking. Indeed, we shall not know peace and serenity until this is accomplished.

69 • The Altered Character of Property Relations

Our notions of property are central to our ways of thinking about economic affairs—about how men do and should make their living. We learn our basic notions of property at a very early age as we are taught not to take or make use of what does not belong to us and to use and control that which does belong to us.

Our traditional thinking about economic affairs carries along this notion that with ownership goes control over what is owned. We think of a man (or a few partners) saving money out of his earnings, buying or building a plant, taking initiative in deciding what his plant will produce, motivated to make as much profit out of his investment as possible, competing with others, and proving his efficiency by his success in the competition. Much of our thinking about the rights and privileges of leaders in business and industry, about the rights and privileges of workers in business and industry, and about problems of government intervention and control in business and industrial affairs assumes this model of property and enterprise as its background.

Adolf A. Berle, Jr., a professor of law, and Gardiner C. Means, an economist, in their pioneering study of modern corporations, raise the question as to whether this notion that ownership and control necessarily go together is now valid for much of contemporary business and industry. The quasi-public corporation is owned by hundreds or thousands of stockholders. It is controlled by a small management group who may own only a fraction of the corporate enterprise. In the quasi-public corporation of modern industry and business, control has been separated in various degrees from ownership. The authors trace out the implications of this new fact of property for our traditional economic notions of wealth, private initiative, and competition and suggest that a revision of traditional economic beliefs is very much in order.

Corporations have ceased to be merely legal devices through which the private business transactions of individuals may be carried on. Though still much used for this purpose, the corporate form has acquired a larger significance. The corporation has, in fact, become both a method of property tenure and a means of organizing economic life. Grown to tremendous proportions, there may be said to have evolved a "corporate system"—as there was once a feudal system—which has attracted

to itself a combination of attributes and powers, and has attained a degree of prominence entitling it to be dealt with as a major social institution.

* * *

In its new aspect the corporation is a means whereby the wealth of innumerable individuals has been concentrated into huge aggregates and whereby control over this wealth has been surrendered to a unified direction. The power attendant upon such concentra-

[From Adolf A. Berle, Jr., and Gardiner C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, pp. 1-4, 345-351. Copyright 1933 by The Macmillan Company, Publishers, and used with their permission.]

tion has brought forth princes of industry, whose position in the community is yet to be defined. The surrender of control over their wealth by investors has effectively broken the old property relationships and has raised the problem of defining these relationships anew. The direction of industry by persons other than those who have ventured their wealth has raised the question of the motive force back of such direction and the effective distribution of the returns from business enterprise.

These corporations have arisen in field after field as the myriad independent and competing units of private business have given way to the few large groupings of the modern quasi-public corporation. The typical business unit of the 19th century was owned by individuals or small groups; was managed by them or their appointees; and was, in the main, limited in size by the personal wealth of the individuals in control. These units have been supplanted in ever greater measure by great aggregations in which tens and even hundreds of thousands of workers and property worth hundreds of millions of dollars, belonging to tens or even hundreds of thousands of individuals, are combined through the corporate mechanism into a single producing organization under unified control and management.

* * *

Such an organization of economic activity rests upon two developments, each of which has made possible an extension of the area under unified control. The factory system, the basis of the industrial revolution, brought an increasingly large number of workers directly under a single management. Then, the modern corporation, equally revolutionary in its effect, placed the wealth of innumerable individuals under the same central control. By each of these changes the power of those in control was immensely enlarged and the status of those involved, worker or property owner, was radically changed. The independent worker who entered the factory became a wage laborer surrendering the direction of his labor to his industrial master. The property owner who invests in a modern corporation so far surrenders his wealth to those in control

of the corporation that he has exchanged the position of independent owner for one in which he may become merely recipient of the wages of capital.

In and of itself, the corporate device does not necessarily bring about this change. It has long been possible for an individual to incorporate his business even though it still represents his own investment, his own activities, and his own business transactions; he has in fact merely created a legal *alter ego* by setting up a corporation as the nominal vehicle. If the corporate form had done nothing more than this, we should have only an interesting custom according to which business would be carried on by individuals adopting for that purpose certain legal clothing. It would involve no radical shift in property tenure or in the organization of economic activity; it would inaugurate no "system" comparable to the institutions of feudalism.

The corporate system appears only when this type of private or "closed" corporation has given way to an essentially different form, the quasi-public corporation: a corporation in which a large measure of separation of ownership and control has taken place through the multiplication of owners.

* * *

Underlying the thinking of economists, lawyers and business men during the last century and a half has been the picture of economic life so skillfully painted by Adam Smith. Within his treatise on the "Wealth of Nations" are contained the fundamental concepts which run through most modern thought. Though adjustments in his picture have been made by later writers to account for new conditions, the whole has been painted in the colors which he supplied. Private property, private enterprise, individual initiative, the profit motive, wealth, competition—these are the concepts which he employed in describing the economy of his time and by means of which he sought to show that the pecuniary self-interest of each individual, if given free play, would lead to the optimum satisfaction of human wants. Most writers of the Nineteenth Century built on

these logical foundations, and current economic literature is, in large measure, cast in such terms.

Yet these terms have ceased to be accurate, and therefore tend to mislead in describing modern enterprise as carried on by the great corporations. Though both the terms and the concepts remain, they are inapplicable to a dominant area in American economic organization. New terms, connoting changed relationships, become necessary.

When Adam Smith talked of "enterprise" he had in mind as the typical unit the small individual business in which the owner, perhaps with the aid of a few apprentices or workers, labored to produce goods for market or to carry on commerce. Very emphatically he repudiated the stock corporation as a business mechanism, holding that dispersed ownership made efficient operation impossible. "The directors of such companies . . .," he pointed out, "being the managers rather of other people's money than of their own, it cannot well be expected that they should watch over it with the same anxious vigilance with which the partners in a private copartnery frequently watch over their own. Like the stewards of a rich man, they are apt to consider attention to small matters as not for their master's honour, and very easily give themselves a dispensation from having it. Negligence and profusion, therefore, must always prevail, more or less, in the management of the affairs of such a company. It is upon this account that joint stock companies for foreign trade [at the time he was writing the only important manifestation of the corporation outside of banks, insurance companies, and water or canal companies] have seldom been able to maintain the competition against private adventurers. They have, accordingly, very seldom succeeded without an exclusive privilege, and frequently have not succeeded with one. Without an exclusive privilege they have commonly mismanaged the trade. With an exclusive privilege they have both mismanaged and confined it."¹

Yet when we speak of business enterprise today, we must have in mind primarily these

¹ Adam Smith, "The Wealth of Nations." Everyman's Library edition, Vol. II, p. 229.

very units which seemed to Adam Smith not to fit into the principles which he was laying down for the conduct of economic activity. How then can we apply the concepts of Adam Smith in discussing our modern economy?

Let us consider each of these concepts in turn.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

To Adam Smith and to his followers, private property was a unity involving possession. He assumed that ownership and control were combined. Today, in the modern corporation, this unity has been broken. *Passive property*—specifically, shares of stock or bonds—gives its possessors an interest in an enterprise but gives them practically no control over it, and involves no responsibility. *Active property*—plant, good will, organization, and so forth which make up the actual enterprise—is controlled by individuals who, almost invariably, have only minor ownership interests in it. In terms of relationships, the present situation can be described as including: (1) "passive property," consisting of a set of relationships between an individual and an enterprise, involving rights of the individual toward the enterprise but almost no effective powers over it; and (2) "active property," consisting of a set of relationships under which an individual or set of individuals hold powers over an enterprise but have almost no duties in respect to it which can be effectively enforced. When active and passive property relationships attach to the same individual or group, we have private property as conceived by the older economists. When they attach to different individuals, private property in the instruments of production disappears. Private property in the share of stock still continues, since the owner possesses the share and has power to dispose of it, but his share of stock is only a token representing a bundle of ill-protected rights and expectations. It is the possession of this token which can be transferred, a transfer which has little if any influence on the instruments of production. Whether possession of active property—power of control over an enterprise, apart from ownership—will ever be looked upon as private property

which can belong to and be disposed of by its possessor is a problem of the future, and no prediction can be made with respect to it.² Whatever the answer, it is clear that in dealing with the modern corporation we are not dealing with the old type of private property. Our description of modern economy, in so far as it deals with the quasi-public corporation, must be in terms of the two forms of property, active and passive, which for the most part lie in different hands.

WEALTH

In a similar way, the concept "wealth" has been changed and divided. To Adam Smith, wealth was composed of tangible things—wheat and land and buildings, ships and merchandise—and for most people wealth is still thought of in physical terms. Yet in connection with the modern corporation, two essentially different types of wealth exist. To the holder of passive property, the stockholder, wealth consists, not of tangible goods—factories, railroad stations, machinery—but of a bundle of expectations which have a market value and which, if held, may bring him income and, if sold in the market, may give him power to obtain some other form of wealth. To the possessor of active property—the "control"—wealth means a great enterprise which he dominates, an enterprise whose value is for the most part composed of the organized relationship of tangible properties, the existence of a functioning organization of workers and the existence of a functioning body of consumers.³ Instead of having control over a

body of tangible wealth with an easily ascertainable market value, the group in control of a large modern corporation is astride an organism which has little value except as it continues to function, and for which there is no ready market. Thus, side by side, these two forms of wealth exist: on the one hand passive wealth—liquid, impersonal and involving no responsibility, passing from hand to hand and constantly appraised in the market place; and on the other hand, active wealth—great, functioning organisms dependent for their lives on their security holders, their workers and consumers, but most of all on their mainspring—"control." The two forms of wealth are not different aspects of the same thing, but are essentially and functionally distinct.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

Again, to Adam Smith, private enterprise meant an individual or few partners actively engaged and relying in large part on their own labor or their immediate direction. Today we have tens and hundreds of thousands of owners, of workers and of consumers combined in single enterprises. These great associations are so different from the small, privately owned enterprises of the past as to make the concept of private enterprise an ineffective instrument of analysis. It must be replaced with the concept of corporate enterprise, enterprise which is the organized activity of vast bodies of individuals, workers, consumers and suppliers of capital, under the leadership of the dictators of industry, "control."

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE

As private enterprise disappears with increasing size, so also does individual initiative. The idea that an army operates on the basis of "rugged individualism" would be ludicrous. Equally so is the same idea with respect to the modern corporation. Group activity, the coordinating of the different steps in production, the extreme division of labor in large scale enterprise necessarily imply not individualism but cooperation and the acceptance of authority almost to the point of autocracy.

² Such would be the case, for instance, if by custom the position of director became hereditary and this custom were given legal sanction.

³ The concept of the consumer as a functioning part of a great enterprise is one which may at first be difficult to grasp. Yet, just as a body of members is essential to the continued existence of a club, so a body of consumers is essential to the continued existence of an enterprise. In each case the members or consumers are an integral part of the association or enterprise. In each case membership is obtained at a cost and for the purpose of obtaining the benefits. The advertising slogan, "Join the Pepsodent Family," is perhaps unintended recognition of this fact.

Only to the extent that any worker seeks advancement within an organization is there room for individual initiative—an initiative which can be exercised only within the narrow range of function he is called on to perform. At the very pinnacle of the hierarchy of organization in a great corporation, there alone, can individual initiative have a measure of free play. Yet even there a limit is set by the willingness and ability of subordinates to carry out the will of their superiors. In modern industry, individual liberty is necessarily curbed.

THE PROFIT MOTIVE

Even the motivation of individual activity has changed its aspect. For Adam Smith and his followers, it was possible to abstract one motive, the desire for personal profit, from all the motives driving men to action and to make this the key to man's economic activity. They could conclude that, where true private enterprise existed, personal profit was an effective and socially beneficent motivating force. Yet we have already seen how the profit motive has become distorted in the modern corporation. To the extent that profits induce the risking of capital by investors, they play their customary role. But if the courts, following the traditional logic of property, seek to insure that all profits reach or be held for the security owners, they prevent profits from reaching the very group of men whose action is most important to the efficient conduct of enterprise. Only as profits are diverted into the pockets of control do they, in a measure, perform their second function.

Nor is it clear that even if surplus profits were held out as an incentive to control they would be as effective an instrument as the logic of profits assumes. Presumably the motivating influence of any such huge surplus profits as a modern corporation might be made to produce would be subject to diminishing returns. Certainly it is doubtful if the prospect of a second million dollars of income (and the surplus profits might often amount to much larger sums) would induce activity equal to that induced by the prospect of the first mil-

lion or even the first hundred thousand. Profits in such terms bear little relation to those envisaged by earlier writers.

Just what motives are effective today, in so far as control is concerned, must be a matter of conjecture. But it is probable that more could be learned regarding them by studying the motives of an Alexander the Great, seeking new worlds to conquer, than by considering the motives of a petty tradesman of the days of Adam Smith.

COMPETITION

Finally, when Adam Smith championed competition as the great regulator of industry, he had in mind units so small that fixed capital and overhead costs played a role so insignificant that costs were in large measure determinate and so numerous that no single unit held an important position in the market. Today competition in markets dominated by a few great enterprises has come to be more often either cut-throat and destructive or so inactive as to make monopoly or duopoly conditions prevail. Competition between a small number of units each involving an organization so complex that costs have become indeterminate does not satisfy the condition assumed by earlier economists, nor does it appear likely to be as effective a regulator of industry and of profits as they had assumed.

In each of the situations to which these fundamental concepts refer, the Modern Corporation has wrought such a change as to make the concepts inapplicable.⁴ New concepts must be forged and a new picture of economic relationships created. It is with this in mind that . . . the modern corporation was posed as a major social institution; and its development was envisaged in terms of revolution.

⁴ It is frequently suggested that economic activity has become vastly more complex under modern conditions. Yet it is strange that the concentration of the bulk of industry into a few large units has not simplified rather than complicated the economic process. It is worth suggesting that the apparent complexity may arise in part from the effort to analyze the process in terms of concepts which no longer apply.

70 • The Shift to Impersonal Relationships

There was a time when the boss and owner of an individually owned business or plant knew most of his employees by name, knew their families, talked with them personally. As corporate organizations of various sizes have become the rule in many parts of our business and industrial life, the social distance between any employee and the person or group that makes the decisions about work, wages, and conditions of employment has widened. And the relationship between employer and employed has been correspondingly depersonalized. Persons have become personnel.

True, the industrial worker now typically belongs to a union which speaks for him in many of the personnel decisions of the company. But here again, in the larger unions at least, the social distance between top and bottom is great, and the relationship between union member and union leader tends to be depersonalized also.

As state and federal governments have assumed more and more of the control functions of local governments, there has been a corresponding depersonalization of relationships between citizen and the political management group.

What does this general shift from personal to impersonal relationships in the lives of nearly every individual mean for the health and self-esteem of the individual and for the health and vigor of the society? These are the questions raised by Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States during World War I and, before that, professor of government at Princeton.

We have come upon a very different age from any that preceded us. We have come upon an age when we do not do business in the way in which we used to do business—when we do not carry on any of the operations of manufacture, sale, transportation, or communication as men used to carry them on. There is a sense in which in our day the individual has been submerged. In most parts of our country men work, not for themselves, not as partners in the old way in which they used to work, but generally as employees—in a higher or lower grade—of great corporations. There was a time when corporations played a very minor part in our business affairs, but now they play the chief part, and most men are the servants of corporations.

You know what happens when you are the servant of a corporation. You have in no instance access to the men who are really determining the policy of the corporation. If the corporation is doing the things that it ought not to do, you really have no voice in the matter and must obey the orders, and you have oftentimes with deep mortification to cooperate in the doing of things which you know are against the public interest. Your individuality is swallowed up in the individuality and purpose of a great organization.

It is true that, while most men are thus submerged in the corporation, a few, a very few, are exalted to a power which as individuals they could never have wielded. Through the great organizations of which they are the

[From Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom*, copyright 1913 by Doubleday and Co., pp. 5-7. Reprinted by permission.]

heads, a few are enabled to play a part unprecedented by anything in history in the control of the business operations of the country and in the determination of the happiness of great numbers of people.

Yesterday, and ever since history began, men were related to one another as individuals. To be sure there were the family, the Church, and the State, institutions which associated men in certain wide circles of rela-

tionship. But in the ordinary concerns of life, in the ordinary work, in the daily round, men dealt freely and directly with one another. Today, the everyday relationships of men are largely with great impersonal concerns, with organizations, not with other individual men.

Now this is nothing short of a new social age, a new era of human relationships, a new stage-setting for the drama of life.

71 • Have We Taken the Wrong Road?

The next four readings probe a major area of decision confronting the American people—and, indeed, the people of all industrialized nations. The issues can be put in various ways—each way reflecting in some measure a point of view toward the desirable resolution of the issues. Since our purpose here is to open debate and discussion, not to foreclose the issues, several ways of stating them are in order.

Prices of products were once controlled in large measure by competition of these products in a free market. No group decided finally how much of any product would be produced or how the producers of various products would be differentially rewarded. These determinations were made through processes of competition in a free market. When too much of any good was produced, prices fell, and the volume of this good offered for sale was thus reduced. Capital sought other, more profitable channels of investment; inefficient producers were driven out of the market. Through the mechanisms of the free market, conditions of optimum profit and productivity were maintained automatically, impersonally, without over-all human planning. Government, in this view of economic enterprise, was not to interfere in the determination of how much of a product would be produced or of how various producers would be rewarded economically. The function of government was to intervene only to protect property and to maintain the conditions of the free market.

Over the last years, the free market has been eroded by many forces. Some of these have stemmed from within business and industry—the growth of a few large corporations in any area of productive enterprise, the freezing out and merger of small competitors, the substitution of administered prices for competitively determined prices, the curbing of competition through monopolistic and quasi-monopolistic practices, etc.

Other forces have stemmed from the organization of labor. In the classic view, labor was a commodity, the price (wages) of which was determined competitively in

[From Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, copyright 1944 by the University of Chicago, pp. 36-37, 39-47. Used by permission of the University of Chicago Press.]

the free labor market. Laboring men refused to have their labor treated as a commodity. They organized and increasingly insisted on determining wages and other conditions of work by bargaining rather than by free-market operations. This has introduced another rigidity into the free-market system.

Still other forces stemmed from government, stimulated in part by demands of national welfare and security in defense and war, in part by the pressure of special-interest groups for the legal protection of their rights and privileges in economic affairs. Protective tariffs, subsidies, minimum wages and prices, plans to produce strategic materials and to direct production from one channel to another, actual governmental operation of productive enterprises, represent some of the ways in which government has tampered with the operations of the free market.

The result has been that the principle of automatic adjustment through competition in the free market is no longer the rule by which the pattern of investment production, prices, and wages is determined. In many areas of our economic life, "planning" of some sort has replaced free-market operations.

The issues raised by this condition can be stated in many ways. Should free competitive enterprise be restored and the restrictions on freedom and competition reduced, whether they stem from corporate enterprises, labor unions, or government? Can and should planning replace automatic adjustment in the over-all determination of the pattern of investment production, prices, and wages, as it already has done in part? If so, who should do the planning? And how should the planners be controlled? How closely are our traditional democratic freedoms tied up with the freedom of economic enterprise and with the principle of automatic adjustment as a way of controlling economic affairs? Can humanitarian objectives and social justice be attained under a system of economic individualism, of free and competitive private enterprise?

Certainly this whole area of issues and conflicting beliefs represents a major area of decision for the American people. And part of the decision is to determine how far the economic trends of recent years are reversible, how much our drift away from economic individualism is inevitable, what the live options open to us at present actually are.

Friedrich A. Hayek, an Austrian economist now living in England, admits our recent drift away from free competitive private enterprise. But he insists that this drift is reversible. Moreover, he sees no permanent, tenable halfway point between complete reliance upon automatic adjustment as a principle of economic control and complete totalitarian state planning in which all of our classic freedoms are curbed and ultimately destroyed.

The liberal argument is in favor of making the best possible use of the forces of competition as a means of co-ordinating human efforts, not an argument for leaving things just as they are. It is based on the conviction that, where effective competition can be created, it is a better way of guiding individual efforts than any other. It does not deny, but even emphasizes, that, in order that competition should work beneficially, a carefully thought-

out legal framework is required and that neither the existing nor the past legal rules are free from grave defects. Nor does it deny that, where it is impossible to create the conditions necessary to make competition effective, we must resort to other methods of guiding economic activity. Economic liberalism is opposed, however, to competition's being supplanted by inferior methods of co-ordinating individual efforts. And it regards competition as superior not only because it is in most circumstances the most efficient method known but even more because it is the only method by which our activities can be adjusted to each other without coercive or arbitrary intervention of authority. Indeed, one of the main arguments in favor of competition is that it dispenses with the need for "conscious social control" and that it gives the individuals a chance to decide whether the prospects of a particular occupation are sufficient to compensate for the disadvantages and risks connected with it.

* * *

It is necessary in the first instance that the parties in the market should be free to sell and buy at any price at which they can find a partner to the transaction and that anybody should be free to produce, sell, and buy anything that may be produced or sold at all. And it is essential that the entry into the different trades should be open to all on equal terms and that the law should not tolerate any attempts by individuals or groups to restrict this entry by open or concealed force. Any attempt to control prices or quantities of particular commodities deprives competition of its power of bringing about an effective co-ordination of individual efforts, because price changes then cease to register all the relevant changes in circumstances and no longer provide a reliable guide for the individual's actions.

* * *

The task of creating a suitable framework for the beneficial working of competition had, however, not yet been carried very far when states everywhere turned from it to that of supplanting competition by a different and

irreconcilable principle. The question was no longer one of making competition work and of supplementing it but of displacing it altogether.

* * *

Yet, though all the changes we are observing tend in the direction of a comprehensive central direction of economic activity, the universal struggle against competition promises to produce in the first instance something in many respects even worse, a state of affairs which can satisfy neither planners nor liberals: a sort of syndicalist or "corporative" organization of industry, in which competition is more or less suppressed but planning is left in the hands of the independent monopolies of the separate industries. This is the inevitable first result of a situation in which the people are united in their hostility to competition but agree on little else. By destroying competition in industry after industry, this policy puts the consumer at the mercy of the joint monopolist action of capitalists and workers in the best organized industries. Yet, although this is a state of affairs which in wide fields has already existed for some time, and although much of the muddled (and most of the interested) agitation for planning aims at it, it is not a state which is likely to persist or can be rationally justified. Such independent planning by industrial monopolies would, in fact, produce effects opposite to those at which the argument for planning aims. Once this stage is reached, the only alternative to a return to competition is the control of the monopolies by the state—a control which, if it is to be made effective, must become progressively more complete and more detailed. It is this stage we are rapidly approaching.

The idea of complete centralization of the direction of economic activity still appalls most people, not only because of the stupendous difficulty of the task, but even more because of the horror inspired by the idea of everything being directed from a single center. If we are, nevertheless, rapidly moving toward such a state, this is largely because most people still believe that it must be pos-

sible to find some middle way between "atomistic" competition and central direction. Nothing, indeed, seems at first more plausible, or is more likely to appeal to reasonable people, than the idea that our goal must be neither the extreme decentralization of free competition nor the complete centralization of a single plan but some judicious mixture of the two methods. Yet mere common sense proves a treacherous guide in this field.

* * *

It is a revealing fact that few planners are content to say that central planning is desirable. Most of them affirm that we can no longer choose but are compelled by circumstances beyond our control to substitute planning for competition. The myth is deliberately cultivated that we are embarking on the new course not out of free will but because competition is spontaneously eliminated by technological changes which we neither can reverse nor should wish to prevent. This argument is rarely developed at any length—it is one of the assertions taken over by one writer from another until, by mere iteration, it has come to be accepted as an established fact. It is, nevertheless, devoid of foundation. The tendency toward monopoly and planning is not the result of any "objective facts" beyond our control but the product of opinions fostered and propagated for half a century until they have come to dominate all our policy.

Of the various arguments employed to demonstrate the inevitability of planning, the one most frequently heard is that technological changes have made competition impossible in a constantly increasing number of fields and that the only choice left to us is between control of production by private monopolies and direction by the government.

The historical fact of the progressive growth of monopoly during the last fifty years and the increasing restriction of the field in which competition rules is, of course, not disputed—although the extent of the phenomenon is often greatly exaggerated. The

important question is whether this development is a necessary consequence of the advance of technology or whether it is simply the result of the policies pursued in most countries.

* * *

Anyone who has observed how aspiring monopolists regularly seek and frequently obtain the assistance of the power of the state to make their control effective can have little doubt that there is nothing inevitable about this development.

This conclusion is strongly supported by the historical order in which the decline of competition and the growth of monopoly manifested themselves in different countries. If they were the result of technological developments or a necessary product of the evolution of "capitalism," we should expect them to appear first in the countries with the most advanced economic system. In fact, they appeared first during the last third of the nineteenth century in what were then comparatively young industrial countries, the United States and Germany. In the latter country especially, which came to be regarded as the model country typifying the necessary evolution of capitalism, the growth of cartels and syndicates has since 1878 been systematically fostered by deliberate policy. Not only the instrument of protection but direct inducements and ultimately compulsion were used by the governments to further the creation of monopolies for the regulation of prices and sales.

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How little there was of inevitability in all this, and how much is the result of deliberate policy, becomes clear when we consider the position in England until 1931 and the development since that year in which Great Britain also embarked upon a policy of general protection. It is only a dozen years since, except for a few industries which had obtained protection earlier, British industry was on the whole as competitive as, perhaps, at any time in its history. And, although during the 1920's it suffered severely from incompatible policies followed with regard to wages and to money, at least the years up to 1929 compare

with regard to employment and general activity not unfavorably with the 1930's. It is only since the transition to protection and the general change in British economic policy accompanying it that the growth of monopolies has proceeded at an amazing rate and has transformed British industry to an extent the public has scarcely yet realized. To argue that this development has anything to do with the

technological progress during this period, that technological necessities which in Germany operated in the 1880's and 1890's made themselves felt here in the 1930's, is not much less absurd than the claim, implied in a statement of Mussolini, that Italy had to abolish individual freedom before other European people because its civilization had marched so far in advance of the rest.

72 • Is the Trend Away from *Laissez Faire* Inevitable?

The theory of *laissez faire* was described in the introduction to the preceding selection in terms of a theory of automatic adjustment in the control of economic affairs. This theory gave government only a limited role, economically, in maintaining the conditions of free competition and in preserving civil order and the rights of property. Yet no government in any industrialized nation, including our own, has maintained this role. Increasingly, governments have intervened in controlling economic practices, in seeking to plan the patterns of our economic life.

Carl L. Becker, late professor of history at Cornell University, considered this trend inevitable under the conditions of social and economic interdependence produced by technological change. "Social democracy," as he named the policies promoted under our own "New Deal" governments of the 1930's and 1940's, is, he believed, only an extension of earlier developments in America and a democratic alternative to the policies of fascism and communism, adopted in other industrial countries. Readers should assess Becker's assumptions of historic inevitability against the counterassumptions made by Hayek in the preceding selection.

The liberal-democratic revolution . . . was directed against those forms of government in which political power was excessive, concentrated, and arbitrary. For this reason it proceeded on the assumption that a proper system would provide for a minimum of governmental authority and a maximum of individual liberty. The liberties that could be de-

manded with the most assurance and denied with the least grace were the liberties of person and opinion—freedom of religion, freedom of speech and of the press, freedom from arbitrary government, freedom from the insane brutalities practiced in the civil and ecclesiastical administration of justice and the punishment of crimes. These were the free-

[From Carl L. Becker, *Freedom and Responsibility in the American Way of Life*, by permission of the publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1945 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., and the University of Michigan.]

doms that all men could understand and from which all could benefit. There was, however, another freedom, less stressed by philosophers and less important for purposes of revolutionary propaganda, which became an essential part of the revolutionary program. This was the right of private economic enterprise.

* * *

For describing the economic theory thus formulated the words "*laissez-faire*" came into common use. The *laissez-faire* theory (which might be rendered the "let-alone" or "hands-off" theory) was primarily an economic theory, but by implication a political theory as well. In respect to politics, it maintained that the government should confine its activities to the preservation of life and property, the enforcement of private contracts, the maintenance of civil order, and the protection of the country against foreign aggression. In respect to economics it maintained that the individual should be free to choose his own profession or business and to enter into private contracts for the acquisition and disposal of property and for the purchase and sale of personal services. As an economic as well as a political philosophy it rested on the current doctrine of natural law. It assumed that the best results would be obtained for the life of the community if men were left as free as possible to follow their natural instincts and aptitudes. The free play of individual initiative, stimulated by the natural acquisitive instinct, would result in the maximum production of wealth, and the natural competitive instinct, operating through the law of supply and demand and the resulting price system, would result in as equitable a distribution of wealth as the natural capacities of men would permit.

It is now obvious that the *laissez-faire* theory was scarcely more than a rationalization of the economic interests of middle-class business men and promoters, and that it had little to commend it from the point of view of the working masses and their interests. But that ominous fact was long obscured because the theory was formulated in terms of the magic word "liberty." The average humane

middle-class man, whether a business man and an employer of labor or not, could easily accept freedom of economic enterprise along with all the other great freedoms, since it so happily enabled him to reconcile his selfish with his altruistic instincts and relieved him of responsibility for his unfortunate brother man by assuring him that he could best serve God and his neighbor by doing as he pleased. "Private profit a public advantage"—such was the succinct formula that enabled so many men of intelligence and good will to entertain the comfortable belief that the pursuit of individual interest would result automatically in a harmony of interests, so that if every man looked out for himself without regard to others the devil would after all not take the hind-most, because something not himself, God or Nature, would do whatever else was necessary for righteousness.

In the nineteenth century, in those countries where liberal-democratic governments were established, the *laissez-faire* doctrine was widely accepted and more or less applied in practice. In no country was the theory more commonly accepted or more fully applied than in the United States; in no country were the conditions such as to make the virtues of the system more apparent or its evils less disastrous. For the average man in all countries, and perhaps especially in the United States, the refinements of the theory were neither understood nor regarded as important; it was enough to know that government should never "meddle in business." This idea became so firmly entrenched that to this day it is the settled conviction of many, perhaps most, business men in the United States; and they believe sincerely that in so far as government does now regulate private business enterprise it has departed from some earlier and happier time when government did not meddle, and private enterprise was perfectly free.

But we are now living in the second great epoch of discovery and invention. Since the seventeenth century the discovery of steam power, gas, electricity, and radiation has made

possible all of those powerful machines, tools, gadgets, and instruments of precision that elicit our wonder and our admiration. The result has been the new technology, which, by giving men unprecedented control over material things, has transformed the relatively simple agricultural societies of the eighteenth century into societies far more complex, impersonal, and highly integrated than anything the prophets of liberal democracy could have imagined—into those mechanized Leviathans which Thomas Jefferson, at least, would have regarded as unreal, fantastic, and entirely unsuited to the realization of liberty and equality as he understood these terms.

At all events, in these complex and highly integrated societies the theory of laissez-faire—according to which government would not meddle in business, and the production and distribution of wealth would be effected by free competition and the flexible response of the price of goods and of labor to the natural law of supply and demand—proved quite inadequate. On the contrary, in every country in which the new technology was adopted, and more or less in the measure that it was developed, there appeared a disturbing paradox—a paradox indicated by Henry George in the title of his famous book, *Progress and Poverty*. The paradox was this: that whereas the system of private economic enterprise, employing the new technology, was capable of an enormous increase in the production of wealth, it proved incapable of making an equitable distribution of it. Progress in the production of wealth marched side by side with widespread poverty; in countries capable of producing plenty, millions were destitute.

The most general result of this situation, as it has developed during the last hundred years, has been to demonstrate with increasing clarity that the laissez-faire theory was based on false or at least inadequate assumptions and could not be realized in practice in any industrialized country without disastrous social consequences. In every industrialized democratic country it has been found necessary, in order to correct the manifest evils of private economic enterprise, for the govern-

ment to “meddle in business” more and more; and this meddling has been commonly justified on the assumption that the proper function of government, so far from being confined to the preservation of life and property, the enforcement of contracts, and the maintenance of civil order, is to do whatever may be necessary to provide reasonably decent conditions of living for the people as a whole.

* * *

The trend towards what I have called Social Democracy appeared first in England, the first country to become industrialized by applying the new technology. In England the abandonment of the old mercantile system is commonly said to have been completed by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846; but it is significant that more than a decade before the laissez-faire theory was thus officially accepted, the evils of the system, as exhibited in the cotton mills, were already so ghastly that it was found necessary to restrict freedom of contract in the employment of children. The first of the so-called “factory acts,” passed in 1833, prohibited the employment in factories of children under nine years of age, limited the hours of labor for children between nine and thirteen to forty-eight hours a week, and of children between thirteen and eighteen to sixty-nine hours a week! Since this was an improvement, we can imagine what the original situation must have been.

But the main point is that this was the first of the “factory acts”; and since that time the British Parliament has passed an increasing number of laws placing restraints on private economic enterprise, all designed to provide a greater degree of equality of possessions and of opportunities between the rich and the poor. Similar legislation for a similar purpose has been enacted in all democratic industrialized countries. Such legislation has been commonly called “social legislation,” or “social reform”; its purpose has been to achieve social as well as political democracy; and it has been justified, tacitly if not explicitly, on the assumption that it is a proper function of government to regulate private economic enterprise in so far as may be necessary to aid

the less fortunate classes of society at the expense of the more fortunate classes.

To this general rule the United States is no exception. I have said that in no country was the theory of *laissez-faire* more commonly accepted or more generally applied in practice than in the United States, and so far as the regulation of particular business enterprises is concerned this is true enough. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the people of the United States have ever really doubted that it is a proper function of government to promote the general welfare. Although Americans have commonly believed that government should never meddle in business, no class of Americans, so far as I know, has ever objected (such is the inconsistency of the human mind) to any amount of governmental meddling if it appeared to benefit that particular class. Since 1815 the Federal Government has regularly enacted tariff laws ostensibly designed to protect infant industries, maintain a high standard of living for labor, and sustain the price of agricultural products. The Federal Government has constructed highways, has given public lands to railroads, and subsidies to steamship companies. Millions of acres of public land have been set aside as an endowment for schools and universities, and most states have maintained at public expense free schools mainly for the benefit of the poorer classes. In 1862 the Federal Government passed the Homestead Act, which permitted any head of a family or citizen twenty-one years of age to acquire one hundred and sixty acres of public land virtually free of cost if he would live on that land for five years. Few people notice the little vans that run about the streets collecting mail, but they are parts of one of the largest business enterprises in the country—a business enterprise owned and operated with exceptional efficiency by the Federal Government. No one thinks that the United States Post Office is a menace to private economic enterprise; and if the government had built, owned, and operated railroads and telegraph lines from the beginning no one would now think that it was meddling in business.

All these measures and activities were in

contravention of the theory of *laissez-faire*. All were based on the assumption that it is a proper function of government to limit the individual initiative of some people and to assist the initiative of others. All were based on the assumption that it is a proper function of government to do what the Federal Constitution was designed to do—"to promote the general welfare."

Nevertheless, the regulation of particular enterprises, which is what Americans commonly think of as government meddling in business, began in the United States at a comparatively late date. In the third quarter of the nineteenth century farmers complained that the railroads were charging them excessive or discriminatory rates for transporting farm products. In 1873 certain Western states passed laws regulating freight rates, and the courts sustained these laws on the ground that "the State must be permitted to pass such rules and regulations as may be necessary for promoting the general welfare of the people."

This decision may be taken as the official denial, casual as it may have been, of the theory of *laissez-faire* and the doctrine that government must never meddle in business. At all events, from that time to the present many laws have been passed, by the Federal and by the state governments, placing restraints of one sort or another on the activities of business corporations, all designed to protect the people against the evil effects of private economic enterprise. Many people profess to believe that the so-called New Deal of the present administration is something brand new and revolutionary—a complete reversal of our traditional custom, something that denies in theory and tends to destroy in practice the American system of free economic enterprise. In fact it was nothing new, but merely a revival and an extension of measures for social reform that Theodore Roosevelt called the "Square Deal" and Woodrow Wilson called the "New Freedom." Particular measures of the New Deal may have been well or ill designed to effect the end desired; but the New Deal itself was in harmony, both in theory and in practice,

with the long-established American tradition that the state "must be permitted to pass such rules and regulations as may be necessary for promoting the general welfare of the people."

It is, then, an obvious historical fact that during the last hundred years there has been, in every democratic industrialized country, including the United States, an increasing amount of governmental regulation of private economic enterprise. The object of such regulation has been to correct the manifest evils of free competition by bringing about a greater degree of equality of possessions and of opportunity for the mass of the people. The method by which it has been effected has been the method of discussion, compromise, and legislation by the democratic procedure. This regulation of economic life by the democratic governments is the form of collectivism or managed economy that I have called Social Democracy. It rests on the assumption that it is desirable to preserve the capitalist system of private enterprise, and that the evils of this system can be sufficiently corrected by the democratic method of procedure.

Nevertheless, during the last hundred years there have been many who have denied this assumption, who have asserted on the contrary that the capitalist system of free enterprise for private profit is itself the chief cause of social injustice, and that accordingly all attempts to correct the evils of the system while preserving the system are bound to fail in the end. Other forms of collectivism or managed economy have therefore been proposed or adopted. These are known as Socialism, Communism, and Fascism.

* * *

These are the four forms of collectivism or managed economy that have emerged during the last one hundred years. They are alike in one respect only: they all reflect the trend in all modern industrialized societies towards a greater degree of governmental regulation of the economic life of the community. In other respects they differ more or less radically. What are the essential differences?

We can make the essential differences clear by defining briefly the traditional democratic

liberties and then asking what part of these liberties the four forms of collectivism require us to give up. The traditional democratic liberties can be briefly defined under three heads. First, intellectual liberties—freedom of speech and of the press, of religion, of learning and teaching. Second, political liberties—free discussion of public affairs, free election by the people of government officials, and the enactment of such laws as the elected representatives can agree upon and the people will support. Third, economic liberties—the right of private property and of private economic enterprise for private profit. Social Democracy asks us to give up none of these liberties, but only to submit to such governmental regulation of private economic enterprise as may be necessary to correct its evils and secure a reasonable degree of equality of possessions and of opportunities for the mass of the people. Socialism asks us to give up permanently the right of private economic enterprise for private profit, but assures us that none of the other liberties need ever be surrendered. Communism asks us to give up permanently the right of private economic enterprise for private profit and the intellectual and political liberties as well for the time being, but allows us to hope that the one-man and one-party dictatorship will at some uncertain future time find it expedient to restore them to us. Fascism asks us to give up all of our liberties forever and to trust to the one-man and one-party dictatorship to think and to act for us better than we can think and act for ourselves.

Which of these four forms of collectivism or managed economy do we want? No doubt the great majority of the people in the United States would reply: "We do not want any form of collectivism at all." In most cases I think the reply would be instinctive, inspired by aversion to the word "collectivism" more than by the thing itself. But there is really no use in saying we do not want any form of collectivism or managed economy, in the sense that I am using these words—no use, that is, in saying we do not want any sort of governmental regulation of private economic enterprise. We already have a good deal of it;

and it is about as certain as anything can be that we shall have more. To say that we do not want any form of governmental regulation of economic life is like saying that we should be better off without Diesel engines, automobiles, airplanes, and broadcasting stations. Maybe we should. But we have these things, we cannot get rid of them by wishing, and while we can adjust our lives to them in one way or another, it is mere folly to suppose that we can refuse to adjust our lives to them in any way whatever.

When I was a boy there was almost unlimited individual initiative and free private enterprise in driving on the highway. The only rules of the road were two: if you met anyone driving in the opposite direction, you turned to the right; if you wished to pass anyone driving in the same direction, you turned to the left. Now the rules of the road are many and complicated. Traffic lights and traffic cops, signs to slow down or to stop,

arrows indicating which streets are one-way streets and in which direction the one way is—these are obvious indications that individual initiative and free private enterprise in driving on the streets and highways have been subjected to a great deal of governmental regulation. No one in his senses thinks that such regulations, or some regulations of a similar nature, are not necessary. But this is only one instance of the general fact that the complex nature and the rapid tempo of technological society have made the trend towards governmental regulation of economic and social life necessary and therefore inevitable. We cannot reverse that trend, but we can, by taking thought, determine within limits the nature and extent of such regulation. We can choose whether we will have the kind of governmental regulation that I have called Social Democracy rather than the kinds I have called Socialism, Communism, and Fascism.

73 • *Economic Individualism Affirmed*

Every American has been taught to prize his traditional human rights as an individual and to resent their infringement by any source of power, public or private. Yet he has seen widespread efforts to reinterpret these individual rights under conditions of interdependent group living. In some countries, these individual rights have been abrogated. In our own country, the individual rights of some kinds and classes of citizens have never been fully achieved. And from time to time limitations have been placed on the individual rights of these and other citizens in the name of national welfare and security. Yet most of us basically want to see essential individual rights maintained and extended.

How closely is the general system of individual rights tied in with our economic system of private enterprise? How far does abrogation of economic individualism mean also the abrogation of other rights of the individual—civil, political, and intellectual—and dim the prospect for productive efficiency and progress? The National Association of Manufacturers believes that this whole complex of values is tied together; that the curbing of economic individualism threatens moral individualism and economic efficiency and progress. This argument deserves careful consideration and criticism, both in terms of actual contemporary conditions and in relation to alternative points of view.

The American system is one under which the individual remains a director of his government rather than its slave. It has, therefore, preserved, subject to essential regulations only:

1. The right of the individual to seek the kind of gainful employment he chooses;
2. The free exchange of goods and services, including the right of the individual to sell the products of his services or any of his possessions to any one at any time;
3. The right of the individual to use the proceeds of such a sale as he may see fit—to invest, to save, to spend, or to give away, in accordance with the law and his own conscience;
4. The right of the individual to own private property and to enjoy its use so long as such does not interfere with the rights of another to a like use of his own property.

Socially, this system preserved freedom of opportunity for the individual to strive, to accumulate, and to enjoy the fruits of his accomplishments. Politically, it results in what we call a "democracy" but what really is a rule of limited powers granted by individuals, through written constitutions, to state and federal governments. Many material advantages have come to individuals under this system. But fundamental in the American system are the human rights which the individual retains while his material advantages are being improved. Only under a system of individualism can such human rights exist. Under any form of collectivism, whether Communism, Socialism or Fascism, coercion is substituted for individual enterprise, force for voluntary cooperation.

Under the American system, the state cannot be the master of its citizens. Until re-

cently, there has been little if any desire on the part of government to assume and perform the actual managerial functions of individual citizens engaged in private enterprise. The present tendency in that direction has become so marked as seriously to raise the question of whether and to what extent government shall regulate or actually manage the business of the nation.

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When the government steps out of its normal role of umpire and intervenes in the ordinary processes of production and distribution, it either reduces individual incentive, individual ingenuity, and freedom of opportunity to a minimum, or it places brakes on human freedom. Often it does both.

• • •

In the United States, the pressure of men accepting their opportunities constantly and continually revitalizes all economic activities; keeps the system from getting old and useless. The automobile may replace the cart and carriage; gasoline may replace the horse; wire nails may replace wooden pegs; package foods may replace home-grown and home-made products. Thousands of commodities replace thousands of others as a constantly evolving system continually improves old products and creates new ones.

This process of change gives the inventive and ingenious an opportunity to rise. It improves the standard of living of the many and gives vitality to the entire economic order. It averts a stagnant society. It is a stimulus to men to push up by their own intellectual ability.

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The struggle of individualism through the centuries has been to increase the benefits of society both in kind and in quantity so that

[From *The American Way*, a booklet in a series published by the National Association of Manufacturers, 1938, pp. 6-7, 11-12, 14-16. Reprinted by permission.]

an increasingly large element of the population may enjoy them.

From this standpoint, the individualistic system represents an agency of social justice. As a matter of provable fact, it is, up to now, the only economic system which depends for its successful operation upon securing the greatest good for the greatest number in steadily rising measure.

The American system, in fact, is one in which money—earned by an individual who retains the right to do with it as he sees fit—is constantly being reinvested for a profit. The products of that accumulation the individual-

istic society must diffuse as widely as possible through natural means. Only in this way can a constantly greater number of human beings own commodities and benefit by the earnings and profits and other advantages that may come from such ownership.

The ability of the consumer to buy represents the dynamic force of the system. It encourages the producer to devote himself to technological improvements so that he may place the benefits of science at the disposal of an increasingly large number of human beings. It thus makes it possible for individuals to enjoy a rising standard of living.

74 • *Economic Individualism Rejected*

Economic individualism has been questioned by some thinkers in terms of its consistency with democratic morality and with a morality of social justice. In this view, problems of unemployment, of individual isolation from community life, of poverty in the midst of plenty, of social insecurity, are essentially problems of public morality. An economic system must be judged morally in terms of its relationship to such problems. Does economic individualism contribute to the solution of these problems or does it thwart and delay it?

Francis J. Haas, a Roman Catholic bishop, believes that economic individualism must be indicted on the moral grounds that it both aggravates problems of social injustice and thwarts efforts to solve them. It will be useful for the reader to compare carefully the defense of "economic individualism" by the National Association of Manufacturers with its indictment by Bishop Haas. How far do both selections give the same meaning to "economic individualism?" Where do their meanings differ? How can we evaluate their quite different assessments of the social and human effects of individualism and of the relations of individualism to democracy?

The subject "Building Our Internal Defenses" clearly implies the need of protection against someone or against something. But

I shall not confine myself to the negative theme of protection against dangers. I shall try to indicate the steps to be taken to pro-

[From "Building Our Internal Defenses," address delivered before Thirty-Fourth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Teachers, Aug. 21, 1951, Grand Rapids, Mich., by Most Reverend Francis J. Haas, Bishop of Grand Rapids. Reprinted by permission.]

mote national and international well-being.

What I shall say will fall within the limits of two questions. First, who or what is the enemy against whom or against which we should raise up defenses? Second, what can teachers do to help build these defenses?

Let me discuss the first question first.

I shall stay within the limits just marked out, and I begin by declaring that we should lose no time in defending ourselves against social injustice. Now, before we talk about social injustice we should agree on what we mean by social justice.

To me social justice is the requirement that rests on every man and woman to serve the community in proportion to his or her ability. If the individual's ability to serve is less, his responsibility is less. If it is more, his responsibility is more. Manifestly, in a democratic society like our own, all are required to give in proportion to what has been given them. This is the concept of social justice I offer for your consideration.

To be sure, in opposition to social justice we have a tremendous amount of social injustice, pulling at and working against our democratic institutions. What is the underlying philosophy of social injustice? In plain language, it is selfishness. True, it goes by other names such as Individualism.

Now, when I declare my opposition to unrestrained Individualism, as I do, I do not by any means advocate any kind of Socialism or state control. I merely say that whoever proposes Individualism as a way of life, namely, that each person should seek for himself and do for himself, regardless of the effect of his conduct on others, is a self-promoter, pure and simple. Against this philosophy of living and doing I raise my voice in protest.

True, the kind of Individualism I am discussing tries to make out a case for itself. It says, let the strong control things, let them do the things that are to be done, and let them become as rich as they want. It goes on, if the strong are prosperous, their prosperity will somehow ooze over and flow down to the weak.

But such a philosophy is totally opposed to our American concepts of democracy. It has,

in the main, been the philosophy of anti-unionism in the past, producing frightful degradation in cities and farms in our country.

Everyone who has read history knows what the results of Individualism are. It is not necessary to go back very far in English history for evidence. In the sixteenth century royal decree had abolished organization of laborers, and in effect told each individual worker to do for himself without organization. Arnold Toynbee writing in his *Industrial Revolution* in 1884 tells in touching but unexaggerated language what happened after 1562. He writes on page 98:

There appears upon the scene for the first time the isolated individual, a figure unknown to mediaeval society, but who constitutes so striking a phenomenon in the modern world. And hence, springs up a new relation between the State and the individual. Since the latter is no longer a member of a compact group, the State has to enter into direct connection with him. Thus, by the growth at once of freedom and of poverty, the whole status of the working class has been changed, and the problem of modern legislation came to be this: to discover how we can have a working class of free men, who shall find it easy to obtain sustenance, in other words, how to combine political and material freedom.

Such is Toynbee's lament over the "isolated" man, stripped by English law nearly four centuries ago, of his God-given right to associate. If you wish a further reference on how the denial of this right degraded the English working classes, I would suggest the first-hand study by Sir Frederic Morton Eden published under the title *The State of the Poor* in 1797. But I must go on.

Let us look at conditions in our own country. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century we have had regularly recurring major depressions or "hard times." They ranged in duration of some nine months in 1833-1834 to four years in 1893 to 1897, culminating in

the Great Depression of 1929. This last depression, during which millions of dollars of work and poor relief were poured out to feed the unemployed, was halted only by industrial activity induced by war preparations in 1938.

Harold Moulton, President of the Board of Trustees of Brookings Institution, estimates in his volume *Controlling Factors in Economic Development* published in 1949, that we have had depression nearly one-third of all the time between 1819-1938. Whatever explanation one may offer for these terrifying periods of unemployment, I subscribe to the well-known theory that the basic cause of depression is that the great masses of underpaid workers cannot buy all they need to live upon, and that they thereby throw others out of employment. Can there be any question that we need defenses in our country against the devastating evil of unemployment and other forms of insecurity?

Or again, I ask you to consider the actual distribution of money income among our people. The *Federal Reserve Board Bulletin* of August, 1950, divides the entire nation into tenths, and shows how much of the total income goes to each tenth. In 1949 the highest two-tenths of our people received 45 per cent of all money income, and the lowest two-tenths received but 4 per cent. One should not be surprised then to be told that approximately one-third of our fellow citizens are forced to go "ill fed, ill clad and ill housed."

Here is social injustice working with a vengeance. And let it be remembered that social injustice is not an impersonal force like an earthquake or an unexpected flood. Social injustice is the product of free human action, exerted by some men on others. A few years ago I received a letter from a socially minded industrialist whose name you would recognize at once if I were to mention it. He said that it grieved him to think of the powerful men in our country who *know* so little and who *care* so little about their fellow Americans.

I do not want to alarm you, but I must say that for us and for the whole world the hour of reckoning is not far off. In reality it is here.

For over a year our country with such assistance as some of the nations of the United Nations could give, has been fighting the enemy in Korea. This enemy now controls about one-third of the 2400 million people in the world, and about one-fourth of the surface of the globe. I need not tell you that the same enemy has, quite apart from the millions he has liquidated, transported some 5 millions to Siberia and to forced-labor camps. Nor need I tell you that even during the past year he has ruthlessly deported out of the single country of Hungary some 100,000 persons.

Now, Communism should be appraised for what it is. Actually Communism is a religion, although it is anti-religious in the extreme. Douglas Hyde, the former editor of the Communist *New Leader* of London, asks, wherein does the appeal of Communism lie? He answers that the Communist argues that Communism is a form of service to one's fellow man. Then the Communist points to the frightful injustices in the world and says, "We will abolish them, and give every man a chance to live."

Here we have a clew, I believe, as to how we must proceed. Our immediate task is to meet force with force. The Communist military must be dealt with, with might, no different from the way that we are compelled to deal with violent inmates in mental hospitals. The Communist is irresponsible in his disregard of truth, in his contempt of human dignity, and in his resort to any means to obtain his ends. The only course open to the free nations is to repel force with force.

But let us not deceive ourselves. Even if the free peoples of the world succeed in subduing the army of Communism by military might, the war will not be won. We cannot combat Communism by force of arms alone—necessary as arms are now—unless we stamp out the force that produces Communism. That force, I hardly need to say, is at bottom injustice.

The other day I put the question to a well-informed man who had escaped from Poland, one of the satellite countries behind the Iron Curtain. My question was, how long

will it take to conquer the 175 Divisions which the Kremlin reportedly now has under arms? Will it take five years, or will it take ten years? Incidentally, this man's own mother was shot dead while working in the field by a Soviet minion. The wretch shot her down in a spirit of recreation, like a hunter would shoot down a pheasant or a rabbit.

The man answered my question: It may take as much as five years to defeat the Soviet armies, and it may take ten years. But important as that is, he said, it is not the important thing to be worried about. Our basic concern should be over Soviet ideology, he stated. That ideology, he went on, will simply assume a new form, even after, and even if the free peoples vanquish the Soviet legions. We should not forget that the Soviet ideology is at bottom born of hunger, and hunger will not be argued with. That he said, is the problem. Such was this man's answer.

My own contention is that social justice which requires every person, in proportion to his means and influence, to help promote the welfare of all, is alone the antidote. Can there be any question that social justice is the prime need in our country with one-third of our people in want? Can there be any question that social justice is the prime need through-

out the world with perhaps one-half of the people in want?

I come now to the second question. What can teachers do to build up our internal defenses? I shall try to answer this question briefly and in positive terms. Moreover, I am sure you recognize that in this brief period of time I can do no more than indicate some of the more obvious things that teachers might do to help establish social justice here and abroad. Let me begin.

Before all, teachers should keep before them the magnitude of the task ahead. There are now in our elementary public and private schools 23,686,000 young people, 6,142,000 in our secondary schools, and 2,700,000 in our colleges. They total 32,528,000 and are taught by 1,375,000 teachers. Surely you of the A.F. of L. Teachers have a challenge before you. But this is not the point I wish to emphasize.

In ten years or perhaps less, the vast bulk of the young persons now in school will be grown-up men and women. Probably the overwhelming number of them will go to work in shops and stores and offices. Surely in their youth they have a right to learn of the evils of Individualism, and that organization is necessary to offset Individualism. . . .

75 • The Possible Consequences of Alternative International Policies

Along with their decisions about the ordering of their economic life, Americans face equally grave choices with respect to the international policy of the United States. How shall our nation relate to other nations? Which policy of international relations best promises an adequate solution to the problem of a third world war, more destructive by far in prospect than either of the first two? What kind of world federation, if any, should our government and American citizens seek? And what should teachers teach young people about these issues?

[From Quincy Wright, "Modern Technology and the World Order," in William Fielding Ogburn (ed.), *Technology and International Relations*, copyright 1949 by the University of Chicago, pp. 186-198. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press. Footnotes omitted.]

There is, of course, no consensus among the American people, or the people of the world, on the answers to these questions. What we find typically is confusion and conflict with respect to them. Even more typically, we encounter strong resistances to raising them as questions in schools or elsewhere. These resistances stem either from a dogmatic assumption that only one loyal American answer is possible (the answer of the resisters) or from an emotional revulsion against facing the awful human consequences that are involved in any inadequate solution to our international problems.

Teachers must, of course, work to overcome resistances against facing the current issues of international relations squarely and against studying and discussing them freely and objectively. Not to work in this way is to abdicate educational responsibility in an area in which much education is needed. But teachers must themselves analyze the issues with objectivity if they are to induce other people to do likewise. To counter dogmatism with dogmatism yields little desirable educative effect.

The following selection, by Quincy Wright, one of the world's leading students of war, offers a model of objectivity in analysis, along with a highly informed weighing of alternative policies for America in her international relations at the present time. Should America go it alone as a nation? Should she try to work for a balance of power among contending nations and blocs of nations? Or should she work for a federation of nations in which some measure of supranational law and law enforcement upon the peoples of the world is achieved? These are the alternatives which Quincy Wright poses and analyzes.

On the whole, the recent war inventions have tended to increase the power differential between great powers and lesser powers and to weaken the relative influence of sea power. Admiral Mahan's theory of the predominance of sea power was questioned in the writings of Mackinder and Haushofer, who thought that land and air power, when based on the heart of the largest land mass—the Eurasian continent—would provide the basis for world control. It cannot be said that World War II decided between Mahan and Mackinder. Rather it suggested that air power was to dominate war and that it depended primarily on industrial potential and technological skill. Ranges became such that the heartland, rimland, or other geographical character of the states' homeland was of lesser importance. Most states recognized this by organizing the air force on a parity with the army and the navy. Finally, the use of the atomic bomb, in

bringing World War II to a sudden close, suggested that an offensive was possible by long-range aircraft carrying this weapon against which there was no defense but fear of reprisal. This situation, coupled with the astonishing destructiveness of the atomic weapon, presented war as an operation approaching suicide for all belligerents.

The future is susceptible of various interpretations according to the assumptions made about the sources of national and world opinion and policies.

CONSEQUENCES OF POLICIES OF SELF-DEFENSE

One may assume that national opinions flow from the tradition of the group, that among these preservation of the existence of the nation will take first place, and that the distrust of other nations will prevent reliance

on anything but national power to protect this basic value. With such assumptions, governments would be expected, under the impact of the greater hazards to national existence developed by the new technology, to pursue policies of national defense with increased energy and single-mindedness. Such defense would involve the acquisition or control of bases and outposts as distant from the heart of the nation as possible in order to provide watching posts for detecting sudden attacks from possible enemies and bases as near as possible to the territory of potential enemies for preventive action or counter-attack upon them. With such policies, the great powers might be expected to bring smaller neighbors within their empires or spheres of interest and to insist on controlling the foreign and military policies of such states.

Such defense would also require secure access in case of war to essential raw materials and foodstuffs. States with predominant navies might be satisfied with bases adequate to control trade routes to sources of materials short in the national domain, but states with inferior navies would have an additional incentive to bring adjacent satellites with needed raw materials into their spheres.

Such defense has also been thought to require the distribution of the national population and the plants essential for military production as protection against bombing, the placing of key industries underground, the initiation and maintenance of police systems for the control of espionage and sabotage, and the disciplining of the population to act on first warning of atomic attack. Such measures of preparedness might establish legal and administrative conditions little different from a perpetual state of war, and little of civil liberty or democracy might remain. All states might become garrison states subject to military order. Furthermore, since offense is the best defense, a good share of the national income might have to be spent in maintenance of vast fleets of airplanes on the alert; outposts, radar equipment, naval and land forces adequate to protect the extended empire; and considerable land forces to occupy enemy territory and to maintain domestic order after

the first enemy attack. It would be expected that, in spite of all precautions, many such attacks would get through and lay waste the cities.

* * *

Defensive precautions . . . would probably be interpreted in other countries as offensive preparations and would stimulate their defensive measures; thus the arms race might proceed with continually accelerating speed. Little sense of security might develop.

Under present conditions the United States and the Soviet Union have such predominance that gradually most of the remainder of the world may come under the spheres of one or the other. As the process develops, it may appear that time favors one or the other. Since both may anticipate eventual war, the one against which time is running may start a war of "necessary self-defense," if in the meanwhile its rival, feeling that it has markedly superior techniques, has not already embarked upon a "necessary preventive war."

Such a war may result in the elimination of one of the states and the establishment by the other of a world empire over what remains of the world order. An empire thus established by conquest may be faced by threats of internal revolt requiring that it be ruled by force. Its measures may be interpreted by much of the population subject to it as oppressive, and the wielding of such vast power may result in corruption and weakening at the center.

* * *

The progress from a relatively stable balance of power through periods of more intense rivalry, elimination of the smaller states, military invention favoring the offensive, increasing ferocity of war, bipolar power politics, universal conquest, corruption, insurrection, and decay has been the fate of most civilizations of the past. Such a development, in logic as well as in history, seems to be the expected development of policies of self-preservation by self-help as a civilization shrinks through invention in communication and transport, as the power of the offensive increases, and as war becomes more destructive through military invention.

CONSEQUENCES OF BALANCE-OF-POWER POLICIES

Another possible assumption is that preservation of the existence of the state will rank first in the opinion of each nation, but each nation will be prepared to support policies designed to obtain security, not through self-help alone, but through maintaining the equilibrium of the power system as a whole. Policies of certain states, notably Great Britain, have for long periods placed maintenance of the balance of power on a parity with national defense. Such policies have depended for success upon the existence of many states and a considerable number of great powers and on complex and flexible relationships of alliances, guaranties, buffer states, subordination, and superordination. Prevention of the natural trend toward simplicity and bipolarity in the power system has been a major objective if stability is to be maintained, but this has not been possible unless one state has been in such a relatively invulnerable position that it can act as balancer, throwing its weight one way or the other as maintenance of the equilibrium requires and itself renouncing any aspiration for world empire.

Such a condition, which existed in Europe during most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, tends to be upset by the shrinking of the size of the system through improvements in communication and transport, by the gradual absorption of the lesser states by the greater, by the increasing vulnerability of the balancer because of military invention, by the entry into the system of outside powers unfamiliar with balance-of-power politics, and by increase in the power of the offensive through military invention.

* * *

The trend toward bipolarity was evident in the development of the alliance system of Europe, beginning with the German-Austrian-Italian alliance of 1882, followed by the Franco-Russian alliance of 1892, the Anglo-French entente of 1902, and subsequent British agreements with Japan and Russia. The United States in the meantime had indicated

support for the entente side in the Algeiras Conference of 1906. Bipolarity was then virtually complete, and World War I soon followed.

The hope has been expressed that independent centers of power might be built up outside the United States and the Soviet Union. The British Commonwealth, western Europe, the Near East, Latin America, China, and India might in time acquire comparable power, thus reducing the relative power position of the Big Two and making possible the restoration of a stable equilibrium. Apart from the lack of historical precedent for a continuing trend toward geographical decentralization of power without destruction of the civilization itself, it seems unlikely that such a movement would gain active support from the superpowers so long as the offensive has the advantage over the defensive, as armaments are entirely controlled by national governments, and as every possible balancer is vulnerable to attack. The United States might be glad to see western Europe revived, but not if there was an equal chance of a revived western Europe siding with the Soviet Union in subsequent difficulties. Russia might be glad to see eastern Europe revive, but only if there seemed to be no chance of a united eastern Europe throwing its weight with the United States. Once bipolarity is established, it is hard to get out of peacefully.

Perhaps such a development should not be considered impossible. If the United Nations should itself develop sufficient independent power to serve as balancer, the conditions for decentralization of power might exist. The League of Nations developed a moral and political prestige during the Locarno period which did check the trend toward bipolarity and which maintained an equilibrium among Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan for a few years. Perhaps if the United States had joined and Russia had joined earlier, the League might have developed sufficiently to handle the Manchurian crisis of 1931. Success in that instance might have prevented subsequent aggressions in Ethiopia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and the power equilibrium with the League acting as

balancer might have been indefinitely sustained. In fact, however, failure attended the League's efforts, and the trend toward bipolarity proceeded rapidly, leading to World War II.

The United Nations, with all the great powers participating, may succeed as a balancer where the League of Nations failed. Its task, however, is much more difficult because the conditions of the world have deteriorated. Compared with the period following World War I, there are greater economic and psychic ravages of war to repair; there are fewer great powers and shorter distances between them; there are greater ideological differences and greater anxieties among both governments and people; there are greater fears of sudden attack and greater necessities of total preparedness; and there is less opportunity for statesmen to deliberate, to digest facts, to appraise alternative policies, and to guide action by reason.

If the United Nations improved its capacity to reach decisions by modifying the veto, acquired some armed forces at its own disposal, and gained substantial support of a world public opinion penetrating into all the important states, it might serve as a balancer even though its independent power was inadequate to enforce its own law. Such a position of the United Nations might reduce the intensity of the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, so that other regions of the world could organize independent power, thus further stabilizing the equilibrium.

In such a situation the United States might try to occupy the role of balancer occupied by Britain during the nineteenth century. But the American constitutional system preventing rapid action, the traditional opposition of the American people to power politics, and the unfavorable conditions of the world already referred to justify little optimism in the success of such an attempt.

The greatest obstacle to restoration of a stable balance of power is the present exaggerated power of the offensive in war because of the air-borne atomic bomb and other instruments of mass destruction. The first step

in stabilizing the equilibrium of power would, therefore, seem to be the effective control of these weapons. The failure of the atomic-energy negotiations has probably been the major factor in thwarting such a development, weakening the United Nations, augmenting the United States-Soviet rivalry, and accelerating the pace toward bipolarity and World War III.

CONSEQUENCES OF WORLD-FEDERATION POLICIES

A third assumption is that nations may develop public opinions based not on national traditions but on allegiance to the world order as a whole. Such an allegiance would imply a merger, at least in matters concerning security, of national public opinions in a world public opinion and a willingness of nations to sacrifice a measure of national independence and sovereignty in order to create a world order able to maintain a regime of law. With such a state of opinion, governments might find it possible to join in creating a world federation.

Both experience and analysis indicate that law cannot be effectively maintained against such powerful entities as states. Law is effective in proportion as the power of the law-making and law-enforcing community is greater than that of its members bound by the law. Where the ratio is of the order of a million to one, as it is in most modern states, law can be effective. The use of force against law violators becomes police action and not war. Where large corporations, trade-unions, or other collective subjects of law develop great power within a state, the problem of law enforcement becomes much more difficult to solve. In the community of nations some states are so powerful that the ratio of power, even if the world community were well organized, would be of the order of three or four to one. Under such conditions enforcement of law has the character of war, as witnessed by World War II. The Axis governments were regarded by the United Nations, not as lawful belligerents, but as lawbreakers, yet the police action to bring them to justice

resembled war in the material sense. Consequently, an effective regime of world law requires that the international system in which states have usually been considered the only members be changed to a federal system in which world government operates directly on individuals in respect to those matters which cannot be handled satisfactorily by any one state.

The argument that war has become intolerably destructive, that neither self-help nor a balance of power can prevent war, and that, therefore, the only salvation for either nations or civilization lies in a regime of effective world law is supported half-heartedly by many advocates of the United Nations and wholeheartedly by advocates of world federation.

* * *

The obstacles to federation are probably little less today than they have been in past civilizations, but it may be that the motive for such federation is greater than it has ever been before because of the destructiveness of modern military techniques.

To be effective, such a partial merger of nations in a world federation must include all the important states, and such unanimity is difficult to achieve.

National public opinions require a high degree of intelligence and foresight to depart from a long tradition of independence and self-help.

Information and education is not likely to develop a world public opinion so long as it is provided by the nations themselves.

It is not easy to draft a constitution which would assure sufficient national liberty to prevent or thwart the growth of tyranny and sufficient direct world government over the diverse peoples of the world to prevent war. The difficulties in such a task increase as the situations, cultures, and institutions of the peoples bound are diverse.

* * *

It is true that the need of union may be greater for the world today than it has been for any civilization of the past. Fear of atomic war and of social revolution is justified by the

present conditions of technology and opinion. World federation might not prevent either of these dangers, but the effectiveness of lesser measures is even more problematical. If the sense of necessity should develop sufficiently in all sections of the world's population, the obstacles to world federation might be surmounted.

* * *

The United Nations Charter may be interpreted liberally, supplementary agreements may be made by the members, special amendments may be accepted, or general revisions of the Charter may succeed, and, through such measures, the United Nations may be converted into a world federation, commanding the support of all nations. The problem, however, of preserving its present relative universality in the process of making it effective to maintain its law is not easy. If one of the great powers seceded and organized its satellites against the United Nations, the trend toward war might be accelerated, and overhasty efforts to convert the United Nations into a federation might precipitate such a situation.

* * *

At some moment in the process of establishing world federation, all important states must join in an act of faith. They must assume that the scheme will work; that, having abandoned their capacity to defend themselves with their own arms, the federation will be able to secure them their rights under the general law. Such a conviction must necessarily proceed from reason and faith rather than from experience. Such reason and faith can hardly be expected unless the forces placed behind the world government appear to be adequate.

The new technology has faced the world with serious problems. The policy of acquiescing in the natural trend according to which each important nation prepares for defense in rivalry to the others, and organizes the lesser powers in its region around it, can hardly avoid war. A policy of attempting to restore the balance of power offers little expectation of success unless accompanied by a considerable strengthening of the United Nations. A

policy of developing the United Nations into an effective world federation presents great difficulties and dangers, though it appears the course of reason. Yet the rivalry of the greatest powers is such that relaxation in preparation by either of them might precipitate the war that is feared. Partial federation excluding the Soviet Union might stimulate that power to more vigorous efforts to solidify its sphere and might intensify the arms race if it did not precipitate war. A combination of caution and boldness is necessary if statesmen are to develop a world order in which freedom and democracy can exist.

The human race is presented an opportunity to employ all its capacity to extricate itself from the hazardous situation into which its penetration into the secrets of nature has brought it. A world order more standardized, co-operative, and organized than has existed in the past is probably necessary to regulate the shrinking world equipped with weapons of extraordinary destructiveness and offensive power. The balance of power moderately adequate in the nineteenth century and the system of collective security which might have

been adequate after World War I are not likely to work under present conditions. If a more integrated world order were created by conquest, the scope of destruction and depth of resentments might destroy the meager bases of a world civilization which have developed. The conqueror might attempt to standardize and centralize the world without regard for cultural differences and national autonomies. Administrative and political simplification might reduce the complexities which are the protection of individual and local liberties. Enough diversity to maintain individual and group interests has been no less important to civilization than enough unity to prevent suicidal war. A world union arising from consent is more likely to provide for both than one arising from conquest. Perhaps, as in the past, greater unity will be achieved by a combination of coercion and agreement supplemented by time, during which custom and reason may gradually modify behavior. The proportion in which each of these elements enters into the process will greatly affect the adequacy and permanence of the result.

76 • The Case for Unrestricted National Sovereignty

Traditionally, the United States has maintained a policy of isolation in international affairs. She avoided "entangling alliances" with European nations. She avoided the game of "balance of power" which England played so effectively throughout her imperial period. America has derived a feeling of security from the two oceans which protected her frontiers and from the navy which she built and maintained to guard these sea approaches. This traditional policy has not, of course, prevented American involvement in several international wars. More especially, it failed, despite strong internal opposition, to prevent her involvement in the First World War.

This latter involvement quickened the sentiment in America, under President Wilson's leadership, for participation after the war in an international association of nations designed to settle international differences by peaceful means. But our traditional isolationist sentiment was mobilized to prevent our participation in the League of Nations.

Prominent among the leaders who blocked this participation was the late Senator William E. Borah of Idaho, who contributes the first part of this selection. In 1934, Senator Borah, looking back upon the failure of the League of Nations to curb nationalistic feeling, saw this failure as the inevitable result of a fundamental failure to recognize the ultimacy of nationalism as man's "strongest and noblest passion" and of a vainglorious attempt to curb this passion through international organization.

The growth of air power, which has rendered obsolescent our ocean defenses, along with our involvement in World War II with its ghastly preview of atomic weapons and the threat of annihilation which they portended, brought us into the United Nations in 1945. At about this same time, Carl L. Becker, a historian, attempted to assay the shape of the world which would follow World War II. He found the force of nationalism still the principal political force of our time and looked skeptically at any world settlement which would curb the sentiment of nationalism or transfer political power from sovereign nation states to any federation of states. He did not despair of rendering national policies in international relations more enlightened. He did deny the availability of supranational organization as a solution to our contemporary problems of peace and war.

Probably, despite our participation in the United Nations and its affiliated world agencies, the preference for America's going it alone in international affairs, which Senator Borah defended so eloquently, runs not far below the surface in the minds of many Americans. And the skepticism of Carl Becker about the viability of supranational organization is shared not only by isolationists but by many internationally minded Americans as well. At any rate, these positions deserve to be studied and evaluated, whatever our personal predilections toward American international policy may be.

Nationalism, the Highest Law

No revolutionary movement can wholly escape the living past. Tradition, after all, does not yield to revolutionary decrees. Experience will have a hearing. Reflection and the inexorable nexus of things bring men back to take up the broken threads, mend them if possible, preserve that which is best, separate things which are fugitive from things which are permanent, and then go forward with that patient building which is the true and dependable method of permanent advancement.

Washington, in his immortal farewell address, said:

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. . . . Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote, relation. Hence, she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. . . . Why

[From William E. Borah, "American Foreign Policy in a Nationalistic World," *Foreign Affairs*, 12 (Jan. 1934 Supplement): iii-xii. Reprinted by permission.]

quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interests, humor, or caprice?

Thomas Jefferson stated the same principle with greater brevity, declaring: "Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none."

This policy thus announced remained the unchallenged and revered policy of this nation for one hundred and twenty-odd years. Whatever differences of view may have arisen in most recent years, none were found, and none will be found, I venture to believe, to question the wisdom of this policy at the time it was announced or for more than a century thereafter. Without it, the Republic could not in all probability have withstood the ordeal of those formative years. It was an indispensable part of the scheme of free government. Together with the declaration of independence, the treaty of peace, and the Constitution of the United States, this policy made up the title deeds to our liberty and the guarantees of our independence.

There were giants in the land in those days, men of deep insight into government, of profound convictions, for which convictions they were always willing to contend and for which they did contend. But in all their contentions, upon this first great announcement as to our foreign policy there was no division. And down through the fierce years of political warfare in which men fought with the relentless ardor of great souls over almost every conceivable question of statecraft or politics, upon this policy they were united. Behind it for more than a century was the combined support and loyalty of this masterly group of men, the only body of men in all history who successfully organized, set up, and maintained a real representative Republic.

It was under this policy that we grew in strength and influence, settled our domestic problems, brought prosperity and happiness to our own people, and won and held the respect of all nations. Under this policy we an-

nounced the doctrine of neutrality and maintained it. We announced the Monroe Doctrine and saw to it that it was respected. In the midst of civil war, we sternly rebuked those who would interfere in our domestic affairs and our position was tremendously strengthened by the policy of non-interference with their affairs which we had always unwaveringly maintained. The influence of this Republic was felt throughout the world, not because of armies or navies, but rather through the force of example—we lived up to our creed, peace, commerce and friendship with all nations. We were not hated, we were not reviled because we had not done more, and, though alone, we were not afraid.

The World War brought about for the first time a wide difference of opinion touching the foreign policy of the United States. Since that time it has been earnestly and ably contended that our foreign policy, so long a part of our national life, was no longer applicable to conditions brought about by that great conflict, and that it should be abandoned once and for all. With this program was to go that part of international law relating to neutrality. We were to assume a position in world affairs the very reverse of that which we had held from the beginning of the government. We were not only to accept full part and responsibility in the adjustment of all questions of international import—and they were practically all of that nature—which should arise in Europe or in the Orient, but even in the remotest regions of the earth. We were never to assume the "immoral" position of neutrals. Nationalism and devotion to one's country were to be reduced to a minimum. Internationalism was to be the supreme, dominating force among the peoples of the world. Like other revolutions, it sought to break with all the past, its traditions, its policies, and the views and teachings of its mighty leaders.

In this revolutionary movement were two groups of individuals—working to the same end but in quite different ways. There were those who sincerely believed that the new course was the high and honorable and most beneficial course to pursue. They entertained

the hope, if not the belief, that the Great War had wrought deep and lasting changes in the minds and hearts of the people of the world and that they were now ready to accept a wholly new theory of nationalism. It seemed to be their theory that war had brought all peoples into a more kindly, brotherly relationship—that in this awful baptism of blood peoples had found a new life and were henceforth to be guided by a new spirit. That those views were, and perhaps still are, sincerely entertained by many people no one can doubt.

There was another group of individuals having a large part in this program, not admirable in many respects, willing to surrender our foreign policy but not quite willing, in the face of what seemed an unsettled public opinion, to say so outright.

* * *

The hopes entertained that the war was to give us a new world have in no sense been realized. One of the ablest of those who entertained this hope, noted for his breadth of mind and candor of thought, has recently declared: "During the 1920's I held the conviction firmly that the world was to experience a period of great international co-operation in every field. . . . Looking at the world today one may still hope but certainly must question the soundness of that vision of the 1920's." No less illuminating are the words of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, spoken only a short time ago. He declared that he was "looking upon a stage with something moving immediately behind the footlights . . . an ominous background full of shadows and uncertainties," and that confidence between nations was more lacking than ever. There is something moving behind the footlights—it is the inevitable forces of national life which often elude detection until they have begun to write their decrees.

In respect to international matters, the world has not changed, the Orient has not changed, Europe has not changed. The nations were never so heavily armed in peace times as in the fifteenth year after the signing of the Armistice. Nearly five billion dollars

are annually extorted from impoverished peoples in preparation for another war. National frontiers in many instances are in effect battle-fronts. The issues between certain leading Powers are as inexplicable and irreconcilable as they were before the conflict began. The old system of the balance of power is again coming to dominate the European continent.

* * *

The answer to nationalism, it is insisted, is the nearness of all peoples by reason of modern invention and improved methods of transportation. Europe is now at our door, it is claimed, and Asia just around the corner. We therefore cannot be indifferent to their problems. We must have a part in all that concerns them, nearness makes their affairs our affairs. This matter of nearness seems to play strange pranks sometimes. It has certainly run counter to the expectations of many in the last twenty years, although we might have been well advised, since it had been doing the same things in crowded Europe for a thousand years. Nearness has not begotten there a common interest or a common purpose or even friendly relations. It has not mellowed the individuality of nations or fostered and strengthened the spirit of co-operation. It has not induced the belief that because of nearness there should be less of the national spirit. It has not put an end to war or rendered it less likely to occur.

* * *

It is one of the crowning glories of the world that we have different peoples and different nations and different civilizations and different political concepts. Standardization may be all right for cattle and sheep and swine of all kinds, but it is not applicable to peoples, or nations, and it is not in accordance with the divine economy of things.

Another revolution, therefore, has failed. It had to fail. It could not escape the living past. It did not weigh sufficiently the inertia of human nature, it underestimated the strength of those ancient prejudices and fears, as well as those ancient faiths and beliefs, the intellectual and moral paths over which men and women had trodden for centuries. The fight

against nationalism has lost. It was bound to lose. It was a fight against the strongest and noblest passion, outside of those which spring from man's relation to his God, that moves or controls the impulses of the human heart. Without it civilization would wane and utterly decay. Men would sink to the level of savages. Individuality in persons is the product of the most persistent and universal law of na-

ture. It is woven of millions of subtle and tireless forces. No power can change this law or frustrate its operation. This is equally true of nations. Internationalism, if it means anything more than the friendly co-operation between separate, distinct, and wholly independent nations, rests upon a false foundation. And when undertaken, it will fail as in the name of progress and humanity it should fail.

Nationalism in the Modern World

In the free-thinking, skeptical civilization of the modern world, in which all religions are tolerated and none can enforce the allegiance of any individual, in which all ideas are freely entertained and all opinions freely expressed, critical analysis has weakened or destroyed many of the preconceptions and beliefs which formerly provided the effective bonds of social union. But there remains, in all the historically created nation-states, one sentiment and one conviction which virtually all men share—the sentiment of nationalism, the conviction that it is the patriotic duty of every man to defend, with his life if necessary, the independence of the nation to which he belongs. As formerly men were willing to fight and die for church and religion, so the modern man is willing to fight and die for state and country.

Nationalism in any sense is always an important political force, but it is only as exhibited in what I have called the historically created nation-state that it reaches the level of a religious faith. By a historically created nation-state I mean one that has been created by a clearly defined nation, largely through its own efforts and as a result of a long period of continuous historical development.

• • •

All men have other obligations than those to the nation-state and exhibit allegiance to

other causes—to local community, to political party, to religion, to science and the search for truth, to international peace and the brotherhood of man. But the history of the last two hundred years demonstrates well enough that for the great majority of men all other obligations and allegiances, when brought into irreconcilable conflict with allegiance to the nation-state and the obligation to defend it, are defeated.

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The sentiment of nationalism in this broad sense is the principal political force of our time; and the historically created nation-state is the form which political power takes in the modern world. Whether the political power of any state is great or little depends upon the size of the country, its population, the material resources available, and the capacity of the people for effective industrial organization and political activity. According to international law, all states recognized as sovereign and independent are equal in rights; but the actual power with which such states can defend and promote these rights varies enormously, ranging all the way from the very slight power of such states as Thailand or Switzerland to the very great power of such states as the United States, Russia, or the British Empire. That political power exists in this form and will be used by each state, whether

[From Carl L. Becker, *How New Will the Better World Be?* by permission of the publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., pp. 59-60, 62, 70-71, 74. Copyright 1944 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., and the University of Michigan.]

great or small, to defend the rights and interests of the people, or what the people regard as their rights and interests, is a fact that must be accepted; and it is futile to base any plans for a new and better world in the immediate future on the assumption that the sentiment of nationalism will be replaced by the love of mankind, or that political power as now organized in sovereign independent states can be transferred, by pledges signed or treaties agreed upon, to a European or world federation of states.

* * *

After the war is over, nationalism, whatever its defects, will remain for any foreseeable future what it has been for a long time past—the strongest political force in the modern world; and this force will be exerted in the form of many sovereign independent states. The sentiment cannot be abated or the power curbed except in the sense that the people of any country can, if they have sufficient intelligence and moral sense, use the power for purposes more enlightened and ends more desirable because they take into account the rights and interests of other nations.

77 • The Case for World Federation

The peace movement, with its various attempts to end war by international means, is a long and an authentic tradition in American experience. It has never lacked support, both religious and secular, among our people. And it is probably safe to say that, despite the chilling effect of the "cold war," the sentiment in the United States for the curbing of national sovereignty and for the formation of some sort of supranational federation which can make and enforce law for the peoples of the world is very strong.

Recent developments in the technology of air transportation emphasize the long-recognized fact of world interdependence and lend strength to the argument based on this fact, that world order requires effective political organization of the "world community." The case to be made for this view is highly plausible, however challenging it may be to our traditional sentiments of isolationism and however challenged it may be by sober estimates of the strength of nationalism in the current world picture. In the following selection, Cord E. Meyer, Jr., a leader in the United World Federalists, argues clearly and persuasively for world federation.

It is particularly important at this time that the objectives of American policy be unequivocally stated by the Congress and clearly understood by the rest of the world. The United States is now engaged in a massive attempt

to be prepared in the terrifying eventuality of a third world war, hoping that the very thoroughness of our preparations will discourage aggression and prevent that war. Huge armament expenditures are being

[From the statement of Cord E. Meyer, Jr., Chairman of the Executive Committee of United World Federalists, *Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Eighty-First Congress*, Oct. 12, 13, 1949, pp. 242-245. Reprinted by permission.]

forced upon us by the fact that the international community is still so unorganized that superior armed force remains the price of national survival.

The United States has no choice at present but to maintain its military strength in a world where every government retains the sovereign right to prepare for and wage war and where there is no legal order to insure that an impartial judgment of disputes between nations can be either rendered or enforced. Our defensive efforts can easily be misunderstood and misrepresented as aggressive in purpose, unless we devote equal energy to a specific program for the substitution of law for naked force in the relations between states.

Moreover, if it is necessary today that American military strength be preserved, it is equally necessary that the temporary and limited effectiveness of national armaments be frankly admitted. No matter how much we spend and sacrifice for preparedness, we cannot in the long run prevent war, protect our people or preserve our liberties by attempting only to maintain our superiority in a world-wide rivalry for arms and allies.

In view of the destructiveness of the new weapons and the range of modern aircraft, which will in time be available to all industrialized countries, no informed person can any longer believe that even the best defended nation can prevent an atomic and biological air attack from destroying a large part of its cities and urban population. And the measures that must be taken in preparation for such a war will increasingly tend to undermine the liberties and living standards that we seek to defend.

Already the sums we are spending on armaments lay a heavy burden on the American taxpayer and make it next to impossible to provide our people with better housing, health, and educational opportunities that they have a right to demand.

The national military expenditures of our allies and the restrictions that we have placed on international trade to prevent war material from reaching our potential enemies limit the progress toward economic recovery made

under the Marshall plan. Here at home, fear of espionage and sabotage inevitably restricts the free exercise of civil liberties essential to democracy.

It is quite possible that the United States might win a formal victory in another world conflict, but the moral and economic consequences are incalculable. In addition to the devastation that we might suffer at home, we should remember that atomic bombs and biological agents will be used primarily for the random and indiscriminate slaughter of entire civilian populations.

However just our cause or noble our purpose, the means we would be forced to employ would be barbarically inhuman. It is difficult to imagine that freedom and democracy would flourish among the survivors of such a struggle. After millions of innocents had perished in the genocide of strategic bombing, it is more likely that new forms of society, more corrupt than any that exists today, would inherit the ruins.

The UN does play a useful part in maintaining international order by concentrating the moral force of world opinion and by mediation. The specialized agencies of the UN have provided assistance to many nations in their efforts to improve the health, education, and well-being of their people. This work must not only be continued but must be expanded, because neither the United States nor peace itself can survive in a world where mass starvation breeds despair and violence. Both for what it has already accomplished and for what it yet may become, the United Nations must be supported by our Government, and you will notice that this resolution carefully avoids proposing any precipitate action that might destroy the United Nations or institutionalize within it competing power blocs.

However, it does not detract from the accomplishments of the United Nations to point out that there is a definite limit to what can be achieved by public opinion unsupported by enforceable law. The present structure of the United Nations has demonstrated itself to be incapable of providing genuine security to its

member nations. The recommendations of the General Assembly are not binding on any nation and as a result are frequently ignored. The Security Council can only take enforcement action against such small states as are without the support of any one of the Big Five. The International Court of Justice lacks both compulsory jurisdiction over member states and jurisdiction over the individual. The United Nations can apply sanctions only against the entire population of a country instead of against the responsible individuals.

Finally, there is no United Nations police force, and under the Charter every member nation retains its sovereign right to prepare continuously for war. These basic weaknesses have made it necessary for the United States and for every nation to rely on national armed strength rather than on the United Nations for protection.

Recognizing these defects, the Representatives who have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 64 call for the development of the UN into a "world federation, open to all nations, with defined and limited powers adequate to preserve peace and prevent aggression through the enactment, interpretation, and enforcement of world law."

In unambiguous language, it is proposed that the United Nations be given constitutional authority to administer and enforce binding law. Since it is neither possible nor desirable that the United Nations be given the right to regulate the internal affairs of the separate nations, this lawmaking authority is to be strictly limited to those powers essential "to preserve peace and prevent aggression."

An exact definition of the powers that the United States might be willing to grant to a revised UN will require much study and consultation between the legislative and executive branches of this Government, but the broad outline of the minimum requirements seems clear to us. If the United Nations is to have a chance of preventing aggression, it seems to many of us who have been studying this problem that it must be given the power under law—

1. To prohibit the use of force by national governments and to require the peaceful arbi-

tration or judicial settlement of their disputes;

2. To limit and regulate national armed forces so that no nation is permitted to retain more military strength than it needs for the preservation of domestic order;

3. To regulate the use of atomic energy in its potentially dangerous aspects and to control certain other types of scientific development that can be easily diverted secretly to mass-destruction purposes;

4. To raise dependable revenue independent of national taxation;

5. To maintain such international inspection forces with free access into every nation as may be necessary to prevent the secret and illegal production of the prohibited types of armaments and such preponderantly strong international police forces as are required to insure effective enforcement of world laws.

Other powers may prove to be necessary in order to satisfy the demands not only of security but of justice, but anything less would open the door to successful aggression. The Baruch plan was a long step forward, but it should be obvious that the attempt to control one type of weapon will inevitably fail if nations are to remain free to compete for every other kind of armament and so long as the only ultimate sanction is war itself. The problem we face is not the inspection and control of atomic energy but the effective control and prevention of international war.

As the resolution clearly implies, legislative, judicial, and executive agencies will have to be established within the United Nations to provide for the just administration of this grant of authority. For example, if the General Assembly of the UN is to be given real legislative authority, some change is unavoidable in the present system of representation, under which each nation is entitled to one vote without regard to the many differences between them. Similarly the UN must be given an executive agency responsible to the Assembly for the administration of the law and with no single nation retaining the veto right. Finally, to interpret and apply the world law that this resolution calls for, a world court or system of courts must be established with compulsory jurisdiction over

the individual and operating under a bill of rights to insure a fair trial. In its demand for law, this resolution correctly recognizes the futility of the League concept of attempting to prevent war by waging war against the whole population of a country.

SUMMARY

The society of the United States of America is today a society in transition. A transitional era is marked by confusion and conflict in beliefs about various important areas of social practice. Traditional common beliefs which once bound the society into a measure of unity are challenged, both by conditions of life to which traditional beliefs are, without revision and reconstruction, in part irrelevant and by alternative beliefs which have come to be held and advocated by sizable numbers of people.

If the confusions and conflicts in belief are to be settled rationally and democratically, people must generally come to accept the fact that our society is in a transitional era and must assume responsibility for resolving its major issues by study, debate, and discussion. If the schools are to play their part in helping people generally to assume such responsibility, educational workers must accept the transitional character of our society at the present time and must themselves achieve objectivity toward the major confusions and conflicts which confront us as a people.

Full acceptance of the transitional character of our society means: (1) the avoidance of dogmatism in the defense of traditional beliefs that no longer fit the conditions of life in industrial society; (2) the achievement of a nonprovincial attitude toward conflicts in belief which require worldwide processes of re-education and reconstruction; and (3) cultivation of a diagnostic attitude which looks beneath the symptoms of confusion and conflict to locate the causal factors in current processes of transition.

Underlying much of contemporary confusion and conflict in beliefs is the fact that science and technology have transformed the conditions of life in all industrial societies, including our own. Traditional beliefs, developed under different conditions of life, no longer are completely relevant to guide the lives of people under radically changed conditions. People differ widely not only as to the substantive beliefs required by contemporary life but also as to the basic methods through which they believe confusions and conflicts are best resolved. If the full task of re-education now required is to be appreciated and understood, the efforts of science and technology must be traced beyond the external conduct of man into the areas of his inner life—into his attitudes, valuations, and habits of thinking.

The growth of corporate forms of economic organization has transformed the character of property in our society and now compels us to reconsider traditional patterns of economic thought which are to some large extent built on earlier forms of property relations. As large-scale organization has replaced earlier patterns of economic, governmental, and community life, our economic and social lives have been increasingly deper-

sonalized. This condition underlines important problems of personal and social health for our society.

Two major areas of choice which confront the American people today have been analyzed. The first has to do with the proper organization of our economic life, more especially with the part that planning and governmental intervention and control should play in the management of economic affairs. Conditions which have rendered inoperative, in the control of economic matters, the principle of automatic adjustment through the mechanism of the free market were noted, and the case for and against economic individualism was explored.

The second area of decision focuses in the proper conduct of international affairs. Should America seek to go it alone as our traditional isolationist sentiment would suggest? Or should we seek to manipulate and control the balance of power among nations and blocs of nations? Or, finally, even while recognizing the power of nationalism in the contemporary world, should we seek to institute a world federation to bring political order to an interdependent and warring world?

Contemporary confusions and conflicts in belief set major problems for education and schooling. The task is now to analyze and clarify these problems.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. The main point made in this chapter is that science and technology have uprooted our old ideas and institutions, and in our efforts to create more adequate ones we have found ourselves confused and in conflict about our basic beliefs. How does the development of science and technology lead to confusion and conflict about social beliefs and institutions? Are there other ways of accounting for such confusion and conflict? If so, state them and tell why you accept them or reject them.

2. Formulate, in your own words, the main points at issue between those who believe in nationalism and those who believe in world federation, and between those who believe in economic individualism and those who advocate deliberate control of the economy. How do the opposing arguments take account of the impact of science and technology upon society?

3. In what way, if at all, is disagreement over social belief and institutions reflected in the operation and management of the school? In the instructional program? In teacher organizations?

1. Perhaps the most dramatic and penetrating account of the influence of science and technology upon Western society is to be found in *Our Changing Civilization*, by John Herman Randall. The author discusses changes in morals, arts, politics, and economics in a historical context and relates them to the growth of science and technology. Professor Randall's book should be supplemented by R. M. MacIver's *The Ramparts We Guard*, as Professor MacIver explores significant social consequences of technological change which were not apparent when *Our Changing Civilization* was written.

The interested student will also find Harold Rugg and William Withers, *Social Foundations of Education*, and George S. Counts, *Education and American Civilization*, worth consulting. Harold Rugg's *Foundations for American Education* explores the significance for education of the changes in biopsychology, sociology, esthetics, and ethics which have taken place in the last fifty years.

2. Both teachers and children are said to be affected by the tensions and conflicts of the present era. For an exploration of this aspect of the subject see *Growing Up in an Anxious Age*, the 1952 yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. From the standpoint of the teacher and his work, see *Educational Freedom in an Age of Anxiety*, edited by H. Gordon Hullfish.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Problem of Education in a Transitional Era



When we speak of our time as a period of transition, what do we mean? Since the word “transition” means the passage from one period or state of things to another, to know what we are talking about we must at least know the state of social existence we are leaving and something about the kind of future state we may come to live in. We noted in the preceding chapter that Western society in general—and American society in particular—has broken its moorings and is now drifting away from the old world of economic individualism, imperialism, and nationalism, and that the direction of drift is none too clear. It is possible that Western society, and even a large part of the rest of the world, will arrive at a new destination where world federation, economic well-being, political morality, and a high level of education and health are established realities. But it is also possible that it will founder on the rocks of human folly, ignorance, and prejudice.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE AND SOCIAL LAG

Scientific and technological knowledge has created golden potentialities for the human race, but it has at the same time supplied it with the means of total destruction. Whether this knowledge is to be used for good or ill depends upon the decisions men make about ends. It is not too much to say that mankind now has within its grasp the knowledge and skill to create a world of material and social well-being far beyond the dreams of earlier utopians. The problems of how to produce enough food, clothing, and shelter, how to maintain health, and how to enrich life with the values of art, music, and worship—the problem of means—have virtually been solved. But the problem of ends still haunts us. We are still debating and fighting over the question of what ends our social institutions should serve. We still lack the wisdom to determine the ends which

we should attempt to achieve for ourselves. From this defect stems the problem of education in our times. We can say with Bertrand Russell:

Broadly speaking we are in the middle of a race between human skill as to means and human folly as to ends. Given sufficient folly as to ends, every increase in the skill required to achieve them is to the bad. The human race has survived hitherto owing to ignorance and incompetence, but, given knowledge and competence combined with folly, there can be no certainty of survival. Knowledge is power, but it is power for evil just as much as for good. It follows that, unless men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow.¹

THE NEED FOR SOCIAL EDUCATION

When he wrote these lines, Russell was not discussing education; yet no stronger statement of the central educational problem in these times can be found. One of the tasks of public education, today as always, is to eliminate illiteracy and to raise the level of knowledge among the people. But an even greater task than this, one which we can ignore only at our peril, is that of helping the growing generation to develop a sense of social and personal direction. In the past, as Russell says, man has been saved from self-destruction by his own scientific and technical incompetence. But now he has enough knowledge to destroy himself. His knowledge of means is too great, social events are too dense, and their tenure is too fleeting for man to depend for his survival upon the old trial-and-error procedures. Of course, the responsibility for developing a sense of social direction is not the school's alone. Other institutions and agencies will share the burden. But this fact in no way diminishes the responsibility of the school.

A related task is that of helping youth and adults in their search for patterns of social existence in economics, politics, and international relations compatible with their values and aspirations. The individual's life has no meaning except in relation to some social milieu characterized by order and a sense of human destiny. In the present age, as in all periods of transition, the pattern of society, which confers significance on the plans and actions of the individual, is itself fragmented. Hence the individual is bewildered and sometimes feels that he is being swallowed up in a social whirlpool. He has need of a theory of life that will justify himself to himself, and this he can have only if there is a stable society which has meaning to him because it confers significance on his life.

In the next chapter we shall present educational plans, proposed by scholars and educational leaders, for building and maintaining an integrated social life in which the individual can find meaning for his existence. At the moment we are interested in making as clear as possible the problem that the school faces in a time of social transformation. We shall attempt to look at the problem rather than at its proposed solutions, and to look at it from various standpoints, to grasp its social roots, and to see its various facets.

¹ Bertrand Russell, *The Impact of Science on Society*, Simon and Schuster, 1953, pp. 97-98.

We can understand the solutions that have been proposed only if we see that the problem is embedded in the complex changes of the social system itself and that its resolution depends ultimately upon the outcome of these changes. The school will necessarily exert an influence on the course of events. But the direction and effectiveness of its influence will be determined in large measure by how well teachers and school officials comprehend the social situation that gives rise to the problem.

The selections presented in this chapter have been chosen for the purpose of focusing the social analysis set forth in the preceding chapters upon the difficulties teachers and administrators will encounter as they try to develop and maintain a satisfactory educational program in a period of transition. We shall be considering the following questions:

1. What is the evidence, if any, that there is confusion and uncertainty in American society respecting both the means and ends of social progress?
2. What is the condition of the system of values in American society? Is there widespread agreement upon what is most worth while, or do the American people harbor all sorts of contradictions and disagreements about life's ideals? Do they agree upon a few fundamental values?
3. What problems face the teaching profession when there is basic disagreement about the social ends the schools should achieve?

The first of these questions is discussed in Selection 78, taken from a study of American society by a commission appointed by former President Herbert Hoover on the eve of the Great Depression. Although it was completed a little more than two decades ago, this report is still one of the most authoritative accounts of changes taking place in American society today. Most of the trends it describes are today not only current but accentuated.

The next two selections discuss the state of the value system. In the first of these, Gunnar Myrdal, the noted Scandinavian economist and social scientist, discusses the various levels of generality on which people think about values, and Robert Lynd, the author of the well-known studies of "Middletown," depicts in a tense manner the kinds of contradictions which tend to follow from these levels of generality. In Selection 80, the sociologist Robert C. Angell affirms the view that there are still certain basic ideals widely held by the American people even though the value system as a whole is to some extent disintegrating.

The remaining selections attempt to present some of the problems that the teaching profession must face in a period of transition. Stanley cogently defines the dilemma of education as the necessity of determining the school's purposes at a time when the social ends by which educational purposes are justified are themselves obscure and uncertain. Raup, in one of the classic studies of education in relation to social pressures, asserts that the school is obligated to bring together in some sort of pattern the various strands of our common traditions as social problems are dealt with in the classroom.

However, as they deal with problems at the cutting edge of the culture, teachers will encounter social resistances from organized groups who, like the school, are interested in the shape of things to come. The final selection, taken from a standard work on curriculum development, emphasizes the problem of developing the ideas, opinions, and feelings of the growing generation so that they will be better able to live adequately in the emerging society.

78 • *Confusion and Drift in American Life*

In the preceding chapter we saw that public opinion is divided over the control of property, the nature of economic motivations, and the organization of economic activities, and over how we should relate ourselves to other nations in the quest for order and peace in the world. These differences of opinion are not *per se* undesirable, for they are the spur to social improvements. But conflicts must lead to creative endeavor if improvement is to result. If differences are allowed to remain unresolved year after year, to hover threateningly over the hopes and plans of men, these very sources of growth and development may become sources of public conflict, apathy, and social drift.

That we have been fumbling and drifting for the better part of the present century in our efforts to deal with basic social problems and issues is the consensus of a large number of social analysts. It is easy to mistake the slow processes of public deliberation and social coordination in a sprawling and loosely organized society such as ours for confusion and drift and thus to exaggerate the amount of public conflict, apathy, and social maladjustment. However, it is unlikely that a national commission of distinguished social scientists, such as the one that prepared the report from which the following excerpt was taken, would have been unaware of this fact. In this selection, the President's Research Committee on Social Trends presents a candid and balanced picture of the general social situation that prevailed in the early 1930's, and there is no reason to suppose that the picture has changed significantly since that time. The Commission calls attention to points of social tension, then examines the disorganization in economic operations, in the government, in the family, and in the very basis of our moral and spiritual life. It calls attention, also, to the fact that the material aspects of our culture are changing much more rapidly than the ideas and institutions by which we adjust to and control the material conditions of our existence. This uneven rate of change in the different parts of our culture leads to social maladjustments and personal insecurity, bewilderment, and anxiety. The question which this national commission raises (and which is no less urgent today than when the commission prepared its report) is whether or not we have the

[From the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, *Recent Social Trends*, copyright 1933 by the McGraw-Hill Book Co., pp. xi-xii, xiv, lxx-lxxi, lxxiv-lxxv. Reprinted by permission.]

ability and the will to bring our values, institutions, and material conditions of life into a dynamic equilibrium in which the individual can find meaning for his plans and aspirations. It requires no great amount of reflection to perceive that what the school teaches will necessarily have a significant bearing upon this question and that, although the teacher may ignore it, he cannot keep his work from having some effect upon it.

The first third of the twentieth century has been filled with epoch-making events and crowded with problems of great variety and complexity.

* * *

With these events have come national problems urgently demanding attention on many fronts. Even a casual glance at some of these points of tension in our national life reveals a wide range of puzzling questions. Imperialism, peace or war, international relations, urbanism, trusts and mergers, crime and its prevention, taxation, social insurance, the plight of agriculture, foreign and domestic markets, governmental regulation of industry, shifting moral standards, new leadership in business and government, the status of womankind, labor, child training, mental hygiene, the future of democracy and capitalism, the reorganization of our governmental units, the use of leisure time, public and private medicine, better homes and standards of living—all of these and many others, for these are only samples taken from a long series of grave questions, demand attention if we are not to drift into zones of danger. Demagogues, statesmen, savants and propagandists have attacked these problems, but usually from the point of view of some limited interest. Records and information have been and still are incomplete and often inconclusive.

The Committee does not exaggerate the bewildering confusion of problems; it has merely uncovered the situation as it is. Modern life is everywhere complicated, but especially so in the United States, where immigration from many lands, rapid mobility within the country itself, the lack of established classes or castes to act as a brake on social changes, the tendency to seize upon new

types of machines, rich natural resources and vast driving power, have hurried us dizzily away from the days of the frontier into a whirl of modernisms which almost passes belief.

Along with this amazing mobility and complexity there has run a marked indifference to the interrelation among the parts of our huge social system. Powerful individuals and groups have gone their own way without realizing the meaning of the old phrase, "No man liveth unto himself."

The result has been that astonishing contrasts in organization and disorganization are to be found side by side in American life: splendid technical proficiency in some incredible skyscraper and monstrous backwardness in some equally incredible slum. The outstanding problem might be stated as that of bringing about a realization of the interdependence of the factors of our complicated social structure, and of interrelating the advancing sections of our forward movement so that agriculture, labor, industry, government, education, religion and science may develop a higher degree of coordination in the next phase of national growth.

In times of war and imminent public calamity it has been possible to achieve a high degree of coordinated action, but in the intervals of which national life is largely made up, coordinated effort relaxes and under the heterogeneous forces of modern life a vast amount of disorganization has been possible in our economic, political and social affairs.

Of these four great social institutions, the economic organization, in part at least, has been progressively adjusted to mechanical invention as is shown by the remarkable gains

in the records of productivity per worker. Engineers hold out visions of still greater productivity, with consequent increases in the standards of living. But there are many adjustments to be made within other parts of the economic organization. The flow of credit is not synchronized with the flow of production. There are recurring disasters in the business cycle. Employer organizations have changed more rapidly than employee organizations. A special set of economic problems is that occasioned by the transformation in agriculture due to science, to electricity and gasoline, and to the growth of the agencies of communication. Another focus of maladjustments has its center in our ideas of property, the distribution of wealth and poverty—new forms of age-old problems.

The shifting of economic activities has brought innumerable problems to government. It has forced an expansion of governmental functions, creating problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency. The problems of still closer union between government and industry are upon us. It is difficult but vital to determine what type of relationship there shall be, for all types are by no means envisaged by the terms communism and capitalism. The conception of government changes as it undertakes various community activities such as education, recreation and health. Again, the revolutionary developments of communication already have shown the inadequacies of the present boundaries of local governments organized in simpler days, and on a larger scale foreshadow rearrangements in the relations of nations, with the possibility always of that most tragic of human problems, war.

Like government the family has been slow to change in strengthening its services to its members to meet the new conditions forced upon them. Many of the economic functions of the family have been transferred to the factory; its educational functions to the school; its supervision over sanitation and pure food to government. These changes have necessitated many adaptations to new conditions, not always readily made, and often resulting in serious maladjustments. The diminishing

size and increasing instability of the family have contributed to the problem.

The spiritual values of life are among the most profound of those affected by developments in technology and organization. They are the slowest in changing to meet altered conditions. Moral guidance is peculiarly difficult, when the future is markedly different from the past. So we have the anomalies of prohibition and easy divorce; strict censorship and risqué plays and literature; scientific research and laws forbidding the teaching of the theory of evolution; contraceptive information legally outlawed but widely utilized. All these are illustrations of varying rates of change and of their effect in raising problems.

If, then, the report reveals, as it must, confusion and complexity in American life during recent years, striking inequality in the rates of change, uneven advances in inventions, institutions, attitudes and ideals, dangerous tensions and torsions in our social arrangements, we may hold steadily to the importance of viewing social situations as a whole in terms of the interrelation and interdependence of our national life, of analyzing and appraising our problems as those of a single society based upon the assumption of the common welfare as the goal of common effort.

Effective coordination of the factors of our evolving society mean, where possible and desirable, slowing up the changes which occur too rapidly and speeding up the changes which lag. The Committee does not believe in a moratorium upon research in physical science and invention, such as has sometimes been proposed. On the contrary, it holds that social invention has to be stimulated to keep pace with mechanical invention. What seems a welter of confusion may thus be brought more closely into relationship with the other parts of our national structure, with whatever implications this may hold for ideals and institutions.

The problems before the nation as they are affected by social change fall into three great groups. One group is the natural environment of earth and air, heat and cold, fauna and flora. This changes very slowly; it is

man's physical heritage. Another group is our biological inheritance—those things which determine the color of our eyes, the width of our cheek bones, our racial characteristics apart from environmental influences. And this also changes slowly. A third is the cultural environment called civilization, our social heritage, in which change is going forward rapidly. In this framework the problems of change will be presented.

* * *

The fundamental principles are that social problems are products of change, and that social changes are interrelated. Hence, a change in one part of the social structure will affect other parts connected with it. But the effects do not always follow immediately—an induced change may lag years behind the original precipitating change. These varying delays among correlated changes often mean maladjustment. They may arise from vested interests resisting change in self-defense, from the difficulty with which men readjust familiar ideas or ideals, or from various obstacles which obstruct the transmission of impulses from man to man. These interrelated changes which are going forward in such bewildering variety and at such varying speeds threaten grave dangers with one hand, while with the other hand they hold out the promise of further betterment to mankind. The objective of any conscious control over the process is to secure a better adjustment between inherited nature and culture. The means of social control is social discovery and the wider adoption of new knowledge.

* * *

The Committee does not wish to exaggerate the role of intelligence in social direction, or to underestimate the important parts played by tradition, habit, unintelligence, inertia, indifference, emotions or the raw will to power in various forms. These obvious factors cannot escape observation, and at times they leave only a hopeless resignation to drift with fate. Social action, however, is the resultant of many forces among which, in an age of science and education, conscious intel-

ligence may certainly be reckoned as one.

Furthermore, it is important not to overstate the aspect either of integration or concentration in control, or of governmentalism. The unity here presented as essential to rounded social development may be achieved partly within and through the government and partly within other institutions and through other than governmental agencies. In some phases of behavior there are very intimate relationships between science, education, government, industry and culture; and in others the connection may be farther in the background. Some of the centers of integration may be local, others may be national, and still others international in their point of reference. What is here outlined is a way of approach to social problems, with the emphasis on a method rather than on a set of mechanisms. More important than any special type of institution is the attainment of a situation in which economic, governmental, moral and cultural arrangements should not lag too far behind the advance of basic changes.

The alternative to constructive social initiative may conceivably be a prolongation of a policy of drift and some readjustment as time goes on. More definite alternatives, however, are urged by dictatorial systems in which the factors of force and violence may loom large. In such cases the basic decisions are frankly imposed by power groups, and violence may subordinate technical intelligence in social guidance.

Unless there can be a more impressive integration of social skills and fusing of social purposes than is revealed by recent trends, there can be no assurance that these alternatives with their accompaniments of violent revolution, dark periods of serious repression of libertarian and democratic forms, the proscription and loss of many useful elements in the present productive system, can be averted.

Fully realizing its mission, the Committee does not wish to assume an attitude of alarmist irresponsibility, but on the other hand it would be highly negligent to gloss over the stark and bitter realities of the social situation, and to ignore the imminent perils in further advance of our heavy technical machin-

cry over crumbling roads and shaking bridges. There are times when silence is not neutrality, but assent.

Finally, the Committee is not unmindful of the fact that there are important elements in human life not easily stated in terms of efficiency, mechanization, institutions, rates of change or adaptations to change. The immense structure of human culture exists to serve human needs and values not always readily measurable, to promote and expand human happiness, to enable men to live more richly and abundantly. It is a means, not an end in itself. Men cling to ideas, ideals, institutions blindly, perhaps even when outgrown, waiting until they are modified and given a new meaning and a new mode of expression more adequate to the realization of the cherished human values. The new tools and the new techniques are not readily accepted; they

are indeed suspected and resisted until they are reset in a framework of ideas, of emotional and personality values as attractive as those which they replace. So the family, religion, the economic order, the political system, resist the process of change, holding to the older and more familiar symbols, vibrant with the intimacy of life's experience and tenaciously interwoven with the innermost impulses of human action.

The clarification of human values and their reformulation in order to give expression to them in terms of today's life and opportunities is a major task of social thinking. The progressive confusion created in men's minds by the bewildering sweep of events revealed in our recent social trends must find its counterpart in the progressive clarification of men's thinking and feeling, in their reorientation to the meaning of the new trends.

79 • *Conflict in American Values*

In the last paragraph of the preceding selection our attention was called to the important problem of clarifying and reformulating our values so as to bring the thinking and feeling of men into line with the sweep of social events. The two excerpts which follow treat this problem from the standpoint of the contradictory character of our beliefs about what is valuable in the sphere of human association. The first reading, by Gunnar Myrdal, presents two important facts about our valuations. Myrdal tells us first, that we have two sets of ideas about what is valuable— a higher and a lower set. The higher set consists of those ideas which apply without qualification to all mankind, such as the ideas of equality and of justice. The lower set consists of those ideas, such as social prestige and economic gain, which we apply to some people and not to others. Then Myrdal calls our attention to the fact that these two sets of beliefs, since they are mutually incompatible, often give rise to conflicts both within the conscience of the individual and within the society. The second reading in this selection, from a work by Robert Lynd, illustrates these conflicting beliefs as they were manifested in his study of Middletown.

Both these readings indicate clearly the confusion of the ordinary citizen at the level of moral belief and action. He is often conflicted, both within himself and in his loyalty to the diverse groups to which he belongs, with respect to the best course of

action to follow in his personal life and in his role as a citizen. The growing generation, which the teacher confronts every day, is also party to this contradiction, uncertainty, and confusion; and, as we shall see later in the chapter, this fact gives rise to difficult and important educational problems.

Primary vs. Secondary Values

At this point it must be observed that America, relative to all the other branches of Western civilization, is moralistic and "moral-conscious." The ordinary American is the opposite of a cynic. He is on the average more of a believer and a defender of the faith in humanity than the rest of the Occidentals. It is a relatively important matter to him to be true to his own ideals and to carry them out in actual life. We recognize the American, wherever we meet him, as a practical idealist. Compared with members of other nations of Western civilization, the ordinary American is a rationalistic being, and there are close relations between his moralism and his rationalism. Even romanticism, transcendentalism, and mysticism tend to be, in the American culture, rational, pragmatic and optimistic. American civilization early acquired a flavor of enlightenment which has affected the ordinary American's whole personality and especially his conception of how ideas and ideals ought to "click" together. He has never developed that particular brand of tired mysticism and romanticism which finds delight in the inextricable confusion in the order of things and in ineffectuality of the human mind. He finds such leanings intellectually perverse.

* * *

In hasty strokes we are now depicting the essentials of the American *ethos*. This moralism and rationalism are to many of us—among them the author of this book—the glory of the nation, its youthful strength, per-

haps the salvation of mankind. The analysis of this "American Creed" and its implications have an important place in our inquiry. While on the one hand, to such a moralistic and rationalistic being as the ordinary American, the Negro problem and his own confused and contradictory attitudes toward it must be disturbing; on the other hand, the very mass of unsettled problems in his heterogeneous and changing culture, and the inherited liberalistic trust that things will ultimately take care of themselves and get settled in one way or another, enable the ordinary American to live on happily, with recognized contradictions around him and within him, in a kind of bright fatalism which is unmatched in the rest of the Western world. This fatalism also belongs to the national *ethos*.

The American Negro problem is a problem in the heart of the American. It is there that the interracial tension has its focus. It is there that the decisive struggle goes on. This is the central viewpoint of this treatise. Though our study includes economic, social, and political race relations, at bottom our problem is the moral dilemma of the American—the conflict between his moral valuations on various levels of consciousness and generality. The "American Dilemma," referred to in the title of this book, is the ever-raging conflict between, on the one hand, the valuations preserved on the general plane which we shall call the "American Creed," where the American thinks, talks, and acts under the influence of high national

and Christian precepts, and, on the other hand, the valuations on specific planes of individual and group living, where personal and local interests; economic, social, and sexual jealousies; considerations of community prestige and conformity; group prejudice against particular persons or types of people; and all sorts of miscellaneous wants, impulses, and habits dominate his outlook.

* * *

The Negro problem in America would be of a different nature, and, indeed, would be simpler to handle scientifically, if the moral conflict raged only between valuations held by different persons and groups of persons. The essence of the moral situation is, however, that the conflicting valuations are also held by the same person. *The moral struggle goes on within people and not only between them. As people's valuations are conflicting, behavior normally becomes a moral compromise. There are no homogeneous "attitudes" behind human behavior but a mesh of struggling inclinations, interests, and ideals, some held conscious and some suppressed for long intervals but all active in bending behavior in their direction.*

The unity of a culture consists in the fact that all valuations are mutually shared in some degree. We shall find that even a poor and uneducated white person in some isolated and backward rural region in the Deep South, who is violently prejudiced against the Negro and intent upon depriving him of civic rights and human independence, has also a whole compartment in his valuation sphere housing the entire American Creed of liberty, equality, justice, and fair opportunity for everybody. He is actually also a good Christian and honestly devoted to the ideals of human brotherhood and the Golden Rule. And these more general valuations—more general in the sense that they refer to all human beings—are, to some extent, effective in shaping his behavior. Indeed, it would be impossible to understand why the Negro does not fare worse in some regions of America if it were not constantly kept in mind that behavior is the outcome of a compromise between valua-

tions, among which the equalitarian ideal is one. At the other end, there are few liberals, even in New England, who have not a well-furnished compartment of race prejudice, even if it is usually suppressed from conscious attention. Even the American Negroes share in this community of valuations: they have eagerly imbibed the American Creed and the revolutionary Christian teaching of common brotherhood; under closer study, they usually reveal also that they hold something of the majority prejudice against their own kind and its characteristics.

The intensities and proportions in which these conflicting valuations are present vary considerably from one American to another, and within the same individual, from one situation to another. The cultural unity of the nation consists, however, in the fact that *most Americans have most valuations in common* though they are arranged differently in the sphere of valuations of different individuals and groups and bear different intensity coefficients. This cultural unity is the indispensable basis for discussion between persons and groups. It is the floor upon which the democratic process goes on.

In America as everywhere else people agree, as an abstract proposition, that *the more general valuations—those which refer to man as such and not to any particular group or temporary situation—are morally higher.* These valuations are also given the sanction of religion and national legislation. They are incorporated into the American Creed. The other valuations—which refer to various smaller groups of mankind or to particular occasions—are commonly referred to as "irrational" or "prejudiced," sometimes even by people who express and stress them. They are defended in terms of tradition, expediency or utility.

Trying to defend their behavior to others, and primarily to themselves, people will attempt to conceal the conflict between their different valuations of what is desirable and undesirable, right or wrong, by keeping away some valuations from awareness and by focusing attention on others. For the same opportune purpose, *people will twist and mutilate their beliefs of how social reality actually is.* In our study we encounter whole systems of

firmly entrenched popular beliefs concerning the Negro and his relations to the larger society, which are bluntly false and which can only be understood when we remember the opportunistic *ad hoc* purposes they serve. These "popular theories," because of the rationalizing function they serve, are heavily loaded with emotions. But people also want to be rational. Scientific truth-seeking and education are slowly rectifying the beliefs and thereby also influencing the valuations. In a rationalistic civilization it is not only that the beliefs are shaped by the valuations, but also that the valuations depend upon the beliefs.

* * *

The system of social ideals which we have called the American Creed, and which serves

as the source of the instrumental value premises in this study, is less specified and articulate in the economic field than, for instance, in regard to civic rights. There is, in regard to economic issues, considerable confusion and contradiction even *within* this higher plane of sanctified national ideals and not only—as elsewhere—*between* those ideals and the more opportunistic valuations on lower planes. In public discussion opposing economic precepts are often inferred from the American Creed. A major part of the ideological battle and of political divisions in the American nation, particularly in the decade of the Great Depression, has concerned this very conflict of ideals in the economic sphere. "Equality of opportunity" has been battling "liberty to run one's business as one pleases."

Contradiction in American Ideals

The following suggest some of these outstanding assumptions in American life:

1. The United States is the best and greatest nation on earth and will always remain so.

2. Individualism, "the survival of the fittest," is the law of nature and the secret of America's greatness; and restrictions on individual freedom are un-American and kill initiative.

But: No man should live for himself alone; for people ought to be loyal and stand together and work for common purposes.

3. The thing that distinguishes man from the beasts is the fact that he is rational; and therefore man can be trusted, if let alone, to guide his conduct wisely.

But: Some people are brighter than others; and, as every practical politician and businessman knows, you can't afford simply to sit back and wait for people to make up their minds.

4. Democracy, as discovered and perfected by the American people, is the ultimate form of living together. All men are created free and equal, and the United States has made this fact a living reality.

But: You would never get anywhere, of course, if you constantly left things to popular vote. No business could be run that way, and of course no businessman would tolerate it.

5. Everyone should try to be successful.

But: The kind of person you are is more important than how successful you are.

6. The family is our basic institution and the sacred core of our national life.

But: Business is our most important institution, and, since national welfare depends upon it, other institutions must conform to its needs.

7. Religion and "the finer things of life" are our ultimate values and the things all of us are really working for.

But: A man owes it to himself and to his family to make as much money as he can.

8. Life would not be tolerable if we did not believe in progress and know that things are getting better. We should, therefore, welcome new things.

But: The old, tried fundamentals are best; and it is a mistake for busybodies to try to change things too fast or to upset the fundamentals.

9. Hard work and thrift are signs of character and the way to get ahead.

But: No shrewd person tries to get ahead nowadays by just working hard, and nobody gets rich nowadays by pinching nickels. It is important to know the right people. If you want to make money, you have to look and act like money. Anyway, you only live once.

10. Honesty is the best policy.

But: Business is business, and a businessman would be a fool if he didn't cover his hand.

11. America is a land of unlimited opportunity, and people get pretty much what's coming to them here in this country.

But: Of course, not everybody can be boss, and factories can't give jobs if there aren't jobs to give.

12. Capital and labor are partners.

But: It is bad policy to pay higher wages than you have to. If people don't like to work for you for what you offer them, they can go elsewhere.

13. Education is a fine thing.

But: It is the practical men who get things done.

14. Science is a fine thing in its place and our future depends upon it.

But: Science has no right to interfere with such things as business and our other fundamental institutions. The thing to do is to use science, but not let it upset things.

15. Children are a blessing.

But: You should not have more children than you can afford.

16. Women are the finest of God's creatures.

But: Women aren't very practical and are usually inferior to men in reasoning power and general ability.

17. Patriotism and public service are fine things.

But: Of course, a man has to look out for himself.

18. The American Judicial system insures justice to every man, rich or poor.

But: A man is a fool not to hire the best lawyer he can afford. •

19. Poverty is deplorable and should be abolished.

But: There never has been enough to go around, and the Bible tells us that "The poor you have always with you."

20. No man deserves to have what he hasn't worked for. It demoralizes him to do so.

But: You can't let people starve.

80 • Social Integration in the United States

Although our beliefs about how human beings should treat one another may often be incompatible, leading us to harbor personal conflicts and to become involved in social controversies, it is possible that Americans still hold a considerable number of such beliefs in common. If it is found that we do in fact share many beliefs, our educational

[From Robert C. Angell, *The Integration of American Society*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., pp. 204, 206-213, 215-218. Used by permission. Original edition out of print. Lithoprint editor., The Overbeck Company, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1947. Some footnotes omitted.]

problems would be greatly simplified, for we should then have a broad base of firm loyalties upon which to rest the educational program and in terms of which to resolve the issues over which the public is divided.

Fortunately, a thorough study of this important question has been made. In an investigation of the effects of organized groups upon American society, Robert C. Angell identified four clusters of values which are universally held in our society. These are the values which enter into our feeling of national unity and our belief in the worth of the individual, in democracy, and in technological progress. Despite the fact that specialized interests and pressure groups have put these values to severe strains, they are still the cement of American society. In Angell's view, these values are now being subjected to conflicting interpretations, and other values which we may once have held in common have been seriously weakened or destroyed. Nevertheless, the four basic values remain the vital core of our moral outlook. The school and the teacher must therefore take them into account if our educational system is to assist in the development and maintenance of a high degree of social understanding and integration.

Our aim throughout this study has been to determine whether the multiplication of free-standing groups in our society gives grounds for the fears of societal disintegration that many have expressed. In trying to draw our results together we shall first indicate what appear to be the institutions of American society, then infer the common values that lie behind these institutions, and finally ask ourselves whether the differentiated groups we have considered are so related to the institutions and values as to preserve a smoothly functioning societal order.

* * *

First of all there is what we have called the national quality. We conceive of the good life in terms of an American life. All the patriotism that is implicit in our loyalty to the national state and in our response to its symbols shows that we cherish our sense of being Americans. This is more than a mere summation of other specific values which are striven for in our society, because there are other aspects to the sense of nationality than common orientation. We not only feel we are doing something together but that we have been somewhere together. There is a sense of com-

mon background and tradition, of attachment to a common soil.

But national feeling is also a factor in the definition of the more specific values in terms of which we wish to live. Many of the qualities of life that we want to enjoy in common are attributes of the *national* life. They are qualities that we are willing to share with Americans but not necessarily with others. We distrust outsiders and feel that they are not capable of participating satisfactorily in the good life which we are willing to see a common possession of Americans. Though this may appear to be a bar to international organization, and in its crudest form no doubt it is, there is no necessity that it should be, for international life may develop common values of a different sort and on a different level altogether.

One quality of this commonly desired American society appears to be a recognition of the dignity of the individual.

If one faith can be said to unite a great people, surely the ideal that holds us together beyond any other is our belief in the moral worth of the common man, whatever his race or religion. In this faith America

was founded, to this faith have her poets and seers and statesmen and the unknown millions, generation after generation, devoted their lives.¹

The utopias of which we dream always make provision for both personal freedom and personal responsibility. We are too much children of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the eighteenth-century Enlightenment to think in any other way. The good society is not thought of as good in itself but good because it gives opportunity for personal development. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in our adherence to the principle of religious freedom—a doctrine which is bound to introduce severe strains into a society.

* * *

Democracy appears to be a third characteristic of the collective life desired by all Americans. It follows almost inevitably from the second. "The assumption upon which the democratic ideal is founded is that human personality is sacred and therefore endowed with prerogatives that are inviolable. Democracy is a form of social organization that accepts the dignity of the individual as an act of faith."² Here again the institutions that we have discovered furnish evidence for the existence of the common value. Our loyalty to the democratic state, our acceptance of political parties, our jealousy of our civil rights—all point to a belief in democratic principles. In a roundabout way, our support of public education does too, for it is undertaken not only to give the individual opportunity but to furnish the state with intelligent citizens.

The democracy that we Americans believe in is, however, more than a political phenomenon. Our American family, for instance, is notoriously egalitarian as compared with the traditional family in Western culture. Our wives and children share to an unusual extent

in the making of family decisions. Again, the growth of clubs and associations organized along democratic lines indicates the harmony of this principle with the American temper. It is almost certainly true, despite practices which conflict with the principle, that we believe that our people should have a share in making the rules under which they live.

A fourth common ultimate value seems to revolve around technological progress or the increasing command of man over nature. The good life we envisage is a life in which disciplined reason and scientific research will continue to give us new and better devices and instrumentalities. That this is an attitude typical of Americans may be inferred from several institutions. The property aspects of capitalism are supported partly because it is thought that they conduce to technological efficiency. Public higher education has been fostered partly in order to secure the continuous training of capable minds in the scientific and technical specialties which constitute the soil from which new developments spring. Even our civil liberties, though mainly a bulwark to democracy, have a motive of efficiency behind them; we wish to be certain that no new practical ideas will be suppressed by those in power. Although the point has not been made earlier in this study, one might argue that the organum of the natural sciences itself has something of an institutional quality. Where science has shown itself capable of prediction and control we trust it implicitly. No society has been more willing than ours to support research and probably in none have so many persons devoted themselves to the disciplined search for truth.

* * *

We must now come to grips with the central question of this whole study. Is the development of free-standing groups in our society a threat to the hold of American institutions and values upon our people? Has the emancipation of these groups from the local community tended toward societal disintegration?

Of the many types of groups we have discussed, only a few seem to be stimulating con-

¹ Felix Frankfurter, "The Immigrant in the United States," *Survey Graphic*, XXVIII (February 1939), p. 148.

² American Youth Commission, *A Program of Action for American Youth* (Washington, 1939), p. 4.

cern for the common welfare. The family still remains a source of "primary idealism." Though the church must also be reckoned as one of the nurseries of common orientation, it suffers from its general loss of influence in the modern world. The school does something, but not much more than stimulate a rather superficial patriotism. The state is probably more effective because of its appeal to the sense of nationality and the enthusiasm that its symbols evoke. Though the benevolent group must be regarded as vitalizing common values, it makes itself felt in the lives of relatively few. Finally, luncheon clubs, professional associations, cooperatives, and political parties sometimes foster common values, but their contribution in this direction is small.

This is not an impressive showing on the positive side. On the negative side we shall cite two lines of evidence.

First, the differentiation of groups has tended to emphasize noncommon goals of striving rather than common ones, so that the former are not so clearly subordinated to the latter as must be the case in a well-integrated society. This can be most clearly illustrated from our discussion of struggle groups. There it was shown that some of these groups do not operate within any institutional scheme at all and that those which do are likely to become undisciplined in times of stress. The same thing is less strikingly indicated with respect to clubs, which in general orient their members toward private or class, rather than public, objectives.

* * *

Large-scale capitalism has also introduced divergence of orientation between employer and employee. When enterprises were small, there was often considerable fellow-feeling throughout a store or factory. Personnel relations expressed common understanding and were informed with common objectives. This is now largely a thing of the past. But even more serious is the fact that employees have begun to lose confidence in the property principles of capitalism too. The increased size of the enterprise has meant a larger and larger proportion of the population working for wages from which little is saved. Thus more

and more persons are being cut off from participation in the capitalist spirit. Indeed these people are being brought into the position of regarding the capitalist spirit as a threat to them and their families. Some are beginning to believe, rightly or wrongly, that the more profit for investors the less wages for them. They may still believe in private property, but they do not feel that the drive to increase it without limit through investment is compatible with their picture of an ideal society.

* * *

We conclude then that, though investment with the hope of profit is still regarded as a legitimate feature of the good society by all kinds of Americans, it is the shrunken and precarious residue of a formerly more inclusive institution that has fallen upon hard days. As the property principles of capitalism work out in the family farm or the small store few find them suspect, but the disapprobation of the large capitalist enterprise has become so general that even the foundation stone of capitalism upon which it is reared is being critically examined.

* * *

The second line of evidence is even more damaging to societal integration. It shows that, despite orientation in terms of common values, there may be no agreement on objectives of common action. This seemingly paradoxical situation is due to the fact that some elements of the population are aware of failure to realize the common values, whereas other elements are not. Thus the poorer people regard certain aspects of their lives as incompatible with American values and support movements aiming to remedy matters. The richer people, not understanding the conditions out of which movements come and thinking the programs unnecessary and unsound, bitterly oppose them. This is no mere disagreement concerning means to an accepted end. It is a disagreement with respect to the need of reform at all. One class has a definite objective—the remedying of a condition thought incompatible with basic American values; the other has no objective beyond preserving the *status quo*, and it is emotion-

ally intense about that because of a sense of insecurity in a time of change.

The reason for such divergence in the interpretation of conditions is evidently the fact that social classes live in different worlds. People who dwell on Park Avenue do not and perhaps cannot have the same conception of the extent to which the dignity of the individual is being realized in New York as do sweated families of the Lower East Side. The fundamental difference is in the perception of the facts.

* * *

This is not to say that our common values are of no importance. They are of the utmost importance. They are the only threads which are holding us back from the brink of disaster. If our gravest problems are to be solved at all, they must be solved in terms of our common ultimate values. There is no other basis for adjustment. Indeed the danger is that in the struggle of opposing programs the loyalty to common values will be lost, that class struggle will degenerate into class war. Then men would come to deny the principles of human dignity and of democracy in the interest of programs aimed to benefit particular classes.

In general the picture is one of a differentiated society whose parts have become so disconnected that few organs speak in terms of the whole, and the words of those which do are subject to the special limitations that class isolation imposes.

* * *

All this is in contrast to the situation formerly prevailing. Because the American community of the mid-nineteenth century was smaller and acquaintance among members of different occupations greater than today, the welfare of the whole community bulked much larger in the total value scheme of the individual. Common ends and values were emphasized more, and their importance was not dwarfed by such a large number of individualized ends and values. Also, because there was a much fuller understanding among all the people of the community, there were not the differences of perception and definition

which we have discussed. There was more common orientation in the lives of our grandfathers than there is in ours, and the groups that must now be relied on to generate a sense of moral community are doing so very inadequately.

There does seem to be, then, some connection between the danger of societal disintegration and the rise of free-standing groups. The latter have disrupted an older type of moral community and have not been able to foster the development of an equally strong one of a new type. Of particular importance has been the large capitalist enterprise that has introduced a split between employer and employee which is spreading to many other aspects of our life. Because of it other types of groups tend to take on a class character. This accounts for the two shortcomings from the viewpoint of societal integration that we have noted: the tendency to emphasize noncommon interests, and the tendency to nullify common values through differences in perception of the existing situation.

It is clear that there are two tasks to be done by those who would preserve the integration of American society. One is to ensure the maintenance of our present stock of common values; the other is to foster understanding across class lines. Neither task is easy. The former is the one that is more likely to find popular support. Once our people realize that there is need for greater emphasis upon common values there will be movements to accomplish it. The danger is of course that these movements will take the form of selfish jingoism. It is always easy to create a superficial unity in a nation by arousing fear of impending attack from without. This has the dual disadvantage that the national cohesion thus engendered cannot be lasting—especially if the nation is well protected from foreign aggression—and that it makes participation in any sort of international order almost impossible. If we are to strengthen the hold of our common values it must be at a deeper and more humane level. We must work together not from fear of attack or hope of selfish national aggrandizement, but because we are

proud of common aims and purposes that harmonize with a world order.

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that greater emphasis on common values will alone assure the continued integration of American society. Of equal if not greater importance is the fostering of understanding across class lines. Only thus can our greatest problem—that of the distribution of goods and services—be solved without violence. Any attempt to maintain common orientation by propagandist nationalism without creating the conditions under which necessary economic readjustments can take place is doomed to failure. And yet there is grave danger that this will-o'-the-wisp will be followed.

Under the stress of our emotional reaction against Nazi barbarism and our enthusiasm for the democratic crusade there is rising a school of patriotism which seeks to exorcise Fascism by religious incantations to democracy and Americanism. The radio and the screen have been fairly dripping recently with their excited and saccharine enthusiasm, and it needs little imagination to foresee its transformation into spy- and

"slacker"-hunting hysteria. The effort to emphasize that the most faulty and limited democracy is vastly superior to the best regulated fascist states is an admirable one; but when this degenerates into a smug complacency about the American scene and ignores, for the sake of contrast, our own social injustices it defeats its own ends. In certain circles it has become almost un-American to mention the plight of our sharecroppers or our permanently unemployed—because Hitler has also mentioned such things.³

Such superficial jingoism merely hides for the moment the deep cracks in our societal structure. It does nothing to promote real understanding between classes, for it harps upon verbalizations of common values without ensuring any similarity of judgment with respect to how conditions measure up to those common values. It cannot mend our societal cracks, and, as a matter of fact, it serves to widen them because it diverts public attention and support from existing efforts to close them.

³ Lillian Symes, "Fascism for America—Threat or Scarehead," *Harper's Magazine*, CLXXIX (June 1939), p. 42.

81 • The Present Dilemma of Education

If it is true, as many maintain, that American society reflects only a very limited set of common values, the purposes of education and the kind of person the school should attempt to develop are exceedingly difficult to determine. Since the purposes and directions of the school are derived from those of the culture, they will be most uncertain when the culture contains the fewest clear-cut, widely accepted social ideals. The fact that such common ideals are rare in present-day affairs has been the central point of the foregoing selections. We turn now to the educational problems that emerge from this fact. The first problem has to do with the question of what the public school is to educate for in a period of social transition. It is clearly set forth in the following excerpt from an extensive treatment of the subject, *Education and Social Integration*, by William O. Stanley.

It is exceedingly difficult to establish or to maintain a consistent program of education in a society characterized by fundamental confusion and conflict. For, in such societies, there is no conclusive standard of the public welfare and, hence, no certain conception of the kind of character which the school should undertake to build. Consequently, the educator has no clear definition of the ends and purposes of education which is generally acknowledged or taken for granted by all parties to the educational enterprise. Moreover—and for the same reason—there is no common perception of the function and role of the school or of the nature and scope of pedagogical authority. In the absence of a common persuasion and outlook, drawn from the substantial core of a unified culture, the various individuals and groups, holding divergent conceptions and beliefs about such vital matters as the nature of man, the goals and standards of public welfare, and the role and function of the school, espouse different theories of education. Any one of these theories may embody a coherent program of instruction. But, to the precise degree that society is divided and confused with respect to its basic intellectual and moral postulates, no unified and consistent pattern of education is likely to win general assent, either in the profession or with the public at large. Under these conditions, the achievement of order and clarity in education, unless it is imposed by a ruthless and powerful minority, is a problem of extraordinary proportions. For its solution demands not simply the fabrication of an intelligible and consistent program of instruction—as a matter of fact, alternative programs meeting this specification already exist—but the re-establishment of the social consensus or else the negotiation of a viable agreement upon the ends and purposes of education (including the formation of character) in the midst of a profound confusion and conflict about the basic intellectual and moral postulates of society and the ultimate standards of the public welfare.

These paragraphs depict, in some measure the dilemma which now confronts American education. Order and clarity in the education offered by the American public school are imperative necessities, from the standpoint of both individual and public welfare. Yet the confusion and the conflict attendant upon a transitional era offer but little foundation for a comprehensive, coherent, and lucid educational program capable of commanding universal assent. Obviously in constructing a consistent program of study and instruction for the public schools, the educational profession cannot ignore the confusion and conflict in the contemporary culture nor can it arbitrarily impose either a common set of values or a unified way of life on the society which it serves.

If the educational profession undertakes to ignore the potent sources of confusion and conflict in society itself, the work of the school will inevitably be negated and hampered by the impact of the culture. To a limited extent, the school, with the aid of the home, can construct a sheltered and artificial environment for the nurture of children. But unless this environment somehow comes to grips with the major dislocations and disturbances of our time, any integrity of character and peace of mind which it may create will crumble and vanish at the first touch of reality. An ivory tower integration, granted that it is possible at all, does not meet the urgent need for order and clarity in education or for the development of sound and wholesome personalities.

If the educational profession attempts to impose on its students a set of values and a way of life not approved by society, it has far exceeded both the limits of its effective power and the bounds of its legitimate authority. Formal education is so small a part of the total nurture of the culture that it is absurd to suppose that the school, by its own unaided effort, can shape the character of the child to a form which has few, if any, roots in the ideals, customs, and institutions of his social

[From William O. Stanley, *Education and Social Integration*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953, pp. 128-130. Reprinted by permission.]

group. Moreover, if the educator were to undertake any such venture, without regard to public opinion or to the balance of political forces operative in the community, he would very quickly discover that the ultimate control of the school has not been vested in the teaching profession. And, finally, as the vicar of society, charged with the important task of inducting the young into the culture, the educational profession has no authority or right, by the terms of its commission, to impose on its students either a way of life or a set of values which have no sanction or warrant other than the unilateral decision and choice of the teaching body.

Thus, the educational profession finds itself caught on the horns of a dilemma. The task of the school, in every society, is that of mediating between the child and his culture. Out of this process of mediation must grow integrated, wholesome personalities of a particular type enjoined by the fundamental aspirations and ideals of society. But, in a transi-

tional era, the direct induction of the young into the culture just as it stands can result only in the development of disintegrated and disoriented personalities. Since society itself is no longer clear and certain (at many points) about either its fundamental postulates and goals or the kind of personality demanded by those standards and purposes, the educational profession, as the vicar of society, has no obvious and secure mandate to guide and direct its educational choices. Yet the profession cannot abjure coherence and symmetry in education, nor can it arbitrarily impose a pattern of its own selection. Hence, the search for order and clarity in education at the present juncture is essentially a search for a consistent way of mediating a partially confused and chaotic culture in the process of transformation: a way, moreover, which is, at the same time, compatible with the development of integrated personalities and acceptable to most, if not all, of the major social groups in our society.

82 • *Controversial Issues and the Educator*

Controversial issues—areas of disagreement—are, paradoxically, areas in which the school can begin to do something about clarifying and expanding the common values. At least, this is the view expressed in the following selection, from the classic work on the relation of pressure groups to education by R. Bruce Raup, a philosopher of education who has long had a special interest in intergroup relationships. In this selection, Professor Raup calls attention to the fact that controversial questions, since they are the “growing edge” of the culture, are the points at which consensus has broken down and at which new beliefs strong enough to fashion a new consensus are being worked out. Organized groups are naturally concerned about these new beliefs, for they will affect the future of the groups. Those groups that profit from the old values and the old ways of doing things fear that their interests will not be so well served under new conditions and consequently favor preservation of the *status quo*. Other groups support the new ideas and practices because they stand to gain from innovations. Usually, whatever new beliefs and practices are eventually established are resultants of these contending forces, representing a creative compromise which, through the agency of controversy and debate, leads to a solution that all or most of the contending parties come to accept as the best attainable in the situation. These competing groups form the context in which the educator must work

if he wishes to help in developing an expanding system of values or to keep the process of schooling in touch with the growing aspects of the culture. For, not only in the economic and political sphere but also in the educational domain, public welfare is worked out in the processes of group interaction.

Many a teacher has at some time wished that he might be released from matters which hold him bound, and come to a more genuine understanding of the forces and influences which shape modern affairs. He has wished it for himself—and for the good of his teaching. But what was only a wish, is today coming to be a recognized necessity. The educator has found that he must understand the society which he serves, for otherwise he is lost in a maze and doomed to professional futility.

There are many possible approaches to an understanding of American society. The more usual ones are in the field of the social sciences. To these the educator has devoted most of his attention. In recent years he has attempted, with considerable success, to make these branches of knowledge more realistic for both teacher and pupil, focusing upon the trends and conditions in present industrial society. In doing so, he has found himself attempting to deal, as educator, with the most vital factors in the conflict and confusion of our changing civilization and culture, that is, with organized interests.

This step is not an arbitrary one for the educator. Two types of difficulty encountered in running the schools have made it necessary for him to know and to appraise these organized interests. First, he has learned that such interests have a part in shaping the lives of the growing generation. Following this up, he has become aware of what powerful educational instruments the social milieu and heritage are in themselves. He has learned that when he works against the organized interests, he is working against something deep

in the culture, and that his efforts for the young are futile; but that when he understands them in this deeper way, he is in a position to capitalize them for the benefit of the new generation. Patriotism, economic unrest, economic power, religious belief—these emotions and realities are all represented by organized interests. The educator must know the interests in this representative capacity, for he must interpret their real educative meaning for the new generation.

The second type of difficulty is encountered when the educator deals with controversial social topics in the schools. If a school is alive, especially in the realm of the social studies, it will almost constantly face conflicts of one kind or another in making some disposition of these disturbing current questions. Economic radicalisms, attacks upon the country's political and social institutions, upon its religious beliefs and its zealous nationalism, birth-control, criticism of exploitations of race or class within the local community—these and other disputed, often explosive topics, confront any vitally conducted program of education in the modern American community. But every one of these questions is the special concern of some organized interest in society, and the conflict is usually focused in the contest among such groups for the ear and the assent of the mass of the American people.

Both indirectly and directly, the teacher feels the pressure of those organized interests. Such pressure is brought to the classroom in the background of the young people whom he teaches; it is present in his own personality; it is operating in the atmosphere which

they all breathe, through advertising, publicity, and all kinds of propaganda; and, finally, it often breaks out in public attack, perhaps in legislation, upon what he teaches and the way he teaches.

* * *

There are undoubtedly some readers who will ask—What has all this concern about economic, religious, political, social and other relations to do with the business of the educator? Why should even the social studies teacher be charged with so great a responsibility as these pages seem to imply?

* * *

A clue to the answer is contained in the statement that education and the schools, whether they will or not, are involved instrumentally in the process whereby a civilization and a culture are continually remade. To teach a child is to modify in some way the social inheritance. The school selects first what shall be taught. It prefers some ideals, some beliefs to others. Then the child selects. The whole class selects, despite any appearance of conformity. When the bases of a civilization and culture are disrupted and confused, this selection becomes a definite contribution to a modified future. It is impossible to deal responsibly with any child or group in any moral or intellectual problem they may face, without in the same act having some effect on the more or less common elements in the culture of the community of which they are a part. In such dealing we are either intrenching more deeply some fixed common ways of believing and doing things, or we are weakening these common patterns by encouraging different ones. There is no escape from the fact that consequences spread out into the whole social process. While this may be true of the conduct of any one dealing in society—of adult with adult, or of parent with child—it is peculiarly significant in the case of the teacher, for he is crucially in the service of the whole community when he becomes officially responsible for the educa-

tion of the new generation. He is especially charged with inducting the young into the ways, the thoughts and the ideals of the community. This has long been known and felt, but we have not been so aware as we might have been that this function always involves some unavoidable effect upon the future of culture.

The educator is thus vitally concerned with the direction which the culture is taking. This he cannot avoid. He can, however, determine that since it is so, he will strive better to understand what he is doing and make his selections and choices with the largest vision of which he is capable.

Does this mean that the educational profession shall assume responsibility for directing any and every phase of the civilization and culture? The thought is absurd. Where then shall it take hold, and what is its distinctive function? Wherein shall it be expected to meet with and contribute a distinctive service to the other interests in American society? Is it not, for one thing, precisely at the points where the ways, thoughts and ideals which are more or less *common* to the people become objects of *conscious attention*? In this category would certainly come the fundamental tool subjects and skills which are always a part of the school curriculum. Here too we should place the attitudes and ideals of which we as educators speak. The content which at any time is given to the seven cardinal principles of secondary education must belong here. The language we cultivate, the methods of thought we employ, the customs we instill, the national, institutional and moral loyalties we would engender, all of these are among the more *common* elements in the culture.

They are patterns of common consent, whereby large portions of a people manage to conserve unity in the midst of endless differences; to maintain stability while conflicting influences play for recognition and power; to achieve a sense of a common cause where conditions have favored individual independence; and to find at least a part guarantee of human consideration in a civilization which has made for a pervasive, dangerous inter-

dependence. For convenience, these elements of common consent will be called points of *consensus*.

But, is not education's chief concern with the individual? Perhaps so, but not in any way isolated from the common culture. Such an abstraction is meaningless. The person is socially made. He cannot change independently of his surroundings. It is not enough to seek the adjustment of the individual to the culture. The culture itself may call for change. The two things, adjusting personalities and seeking harmony among the common traditions which are the heart of our culture, are phases of the same total process. To neglect either is to misdirect the program of education. To educate for enrichment of individuality, without giving constant attention to the numerous common ways, beliefs and aspirations of the community may be aptly likened to a gardener's attempt to raise better plants without any regard to the atmosphere and the soil in which they are to germinate and grow.

The educator deals consciously with the common culture. He not only transmits but helps remake it. Particularly in these times he is made acutely aware of the fact that in crucial parts "the common culture" falls short of being common. It does not come to a people ready-made. It is the product of long generations of experience, and often finally formulated only at dreadful cost in human suffering. Then it does not stay formulated. Indeed, one of the outstanding characteristics of modern society is that changing conditions have broken down what were profound points of consensus. While they are stoutly defended by great portions of the population, they still have been impugned beyond restoration to their traditional form. The only hope, when this occurs, is to struggle on to a new consensus. Some see this, and take up the struggle. Others, with interests deeply entrenched in the old, refuse to see it

and rise to resist the change. Thus conflicts rage continually. * * *

More often than not the very existence of the groups and their purposes are symptoms of a fundamental struggle between the defenders of one form of consensus and those who have broken from that form and are seeking recognition and support for some other. Such conflicts are not arbitrary. They are genuine expressions of deep lying disturbances in the nature of society and its culture. Each group is an instrument of social movement, operating on the growing edge of culture, some deviating from traditional consensus, others, with interests entrenched, defending the obsolete consensus as they would defend life itself.

* * *

In a word, the educator, when he draws up a course of study or a program for the schools, or when he more than superficially considers the ideals and objectives with which he carries on, finds himself dealing with *the very same disrupted and conflicting strands of the common culture* which account for the existence and the contentions of the active organized interests in American society. This is the educator's meeting ground with almost every group in the land. He cannot understand the culture he transmits without knowing these groups, and he cannot understand the groups he must meet without knowing the points of change in the culture which give the organized groups cause for being. He works with these organized groups on the advancing front of a changing social order, and interprets their relation to a new culture. He asks what great common denominators of the prevailing culture they are defending, or, if the consensus of the old has begun to break, what new patterns they are proposing. In this way he learns and comprehends their integral relation to the heart of the educational task.

83 • Re-education: a Major Task

Whatever else education may be, it is at least a process of changing the individual. No matter how much consideration may be given to pressure groups, to the nature of the value system, and to economic and political conditions, the teacher must ultimately face the inescapable task of his profession—the education of the individual. All our study of social and psychological factors and conditions is conducted for the purpose of giving direction to, and providing means for, the performance of this task.

In the following selection, B. Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores remind us of this central concern of the teacher. They outline the dimensions of the task in the present period of social transition and make clear what the focal point of instruction must be, now that the old beliefs, ideals, and social practices can no longer be taken for granted.

Curriculum making in an era of cultural transformation is faced by problems not encountered in a period of cultural stability. The learnings which the individual acquires informally by cultural induction are usually satisfactory in a static period, for there are few, if any, new cultural patterns and rules of conduct with which they conflict. The development of a consistent point of view and moral character—which is one of the basic tasks of education, broadly conceived—is performed in such a period by the processes of cultural induction. There remains for the school the task of overlaying these fundamental learnings with a veneer of skills, information, and technical knowledge. With slight modifications, this is the way the teaching profession has conceived its task throughout the history of American education. Even in the last century, when considerable stress was placed upon moral content, the purpose of the school was to reinforce the teachings of the home and the church.

But in a period of profound cultural change, such as is now being witnessed in the United States and in the whole world, the learnings laid down in personal structures by

the forces of induction can no longer be taken at their face value. Most of these learnings belong to old cultural patterns, which have been invalidated in varying degrees by new economic, political, and social realities and must, therefore, be discounted. They are vestiges of prior cultural phases, and many of them have to be removed from the social structure; the individual, too, must be freed of them. Education, then, will be required to penetrate the deeper layers of personality and, thereby, to assist in the reconstruction of the loyalties, aspirations, points of view, and moral ideals of individuals. The task is no less than that of transforming the characters of men—of creating new personality types adequate for the task of controlling the social arrangements emerging from the conditions created by science and technology.

The child comes to school already “educated.” He has been learning from his parents, playmates, and the countless social influences that play upon him from the time of birth. On entering school he possesses points of view, rules of conduct, social techniques, mechanical skills, language habits, aspirations, attitudes, and a welter of information.

[From B. Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores, *Fundamentals of Curriculum Development*, World Book Co., 1950, pp. 120-122. Used by permission.]

The child does not leave the world behind him when he enters the doors of the school, no matter how isolated from ordinary social activities the educational program may be. He brings his cultural background with him into the classroom and into all the activities in which he participates. He feels, thinks, and reacts in every school situation out of this cultural background, which is present by implication in his personality. Not that the child sees his life in the school and his life out of the school as one; he may, and frequently does, see them as quite different worlds. This does not, however, alter the basic fact that the way he views the activities of the school, whether or not he sees any value in them, goes back to the cultural roots of his personality.

As long as this out-of-school education is in line with cultural reality, it is the function of the school to reinforce these learnings and to build a richer and more extended education upon them. Unfortunately, such out-of-school learnings—and, it may be added, many school learnings—do not conform to reality, or else they satisfy an undesirable social reality. This fact is clearly seen in such learnings as those that characterize a criminal, an alcoholic, or a juvenile delinquent. It is now known that these learnings are acquired in the same way as those that meet with general social approval. Each of these kinds of learnings goes back to the influence of the social groups with which the individual is associated. The learned behavior of the social deviate lacks social reality, however, because it fails to take account of what is acceptable, or potentially acceptable, in realms of wider human association. In the groups where these deviate behaviors are acquired, they of course conform to the realities as the group sees them. But the deviate's wants and aspirations, as well as his rules of conduct, are not in accord with those of the persons who constitute the wider society, nor are they potentially acceptable to that society.

It is no less true that much of what passes as normal behavior is out of step with cultural reality. The ideas, loyalties, and information of the individual may not accord with the new conditions and rules emerging in society at a particular time. His old patterns of thought and action have no roots in reality when the conditions out of which they arose no longer exist. This is just as true of children on first entering school as it is of adults of all ages. A person who believes that all "foreigners" are "reds," that all government restraint on business is evil, that criminals are such because they *will* to be so, or that Negroes should not be allowed to hold jobs which white people want, is out of step with the dominant social rules constituting the heart of the democratic value-system and with the reality of objective facts.

The necessity of attempting to bring the social deviate into line with the facts of society and with what are considered to be desirable social norms is generally recognized. It is also becoming clear that this end can be achieved only through the processes of reeducation. It is not recognized, however, that modern cultural change requires an equal emphasis upon mass reeducation with reeducation with respect to ideas, goals, skills, and ideals that traditionally have been considered normal and desirable. The burden of the preceding chapters was to show that many cultural elements, whose validity in the past has been taken for granted, can no longer be accepted without serious reconstruction, if they can be accepted at all.

Yet these cultural factors are built into the personalities of individuals by the informal processes of induction from lingering social patterns. If this is true, it follows that one of the primary tasks of curriculum development is to build a program in which everyone can learn, through the processes of reeducation, to become the kind of person demanded by the cultural patterns and realities now in the making.

SUMMARY

A transition period is always marked by disorganization of the society, to a greater or lesser degree, in its economic, political, and social activities; confusion among the people, and a tendency to drift and to fall into apathy or bitter conflict rather than take chances on an uncertain future; weakening of the traditional beliefs and values, especially among the younger generation; and numerous and severe personal maladjustments. It may reasonably be concluded from the readings presented in this and the preceding chapter that something approaching this state of affairs prevails today in American society.

The educational significance of this conclusion need not be restated here, for to do so would entail reformulating all the various relationships and ramifications set forth in the selections composing the major part of the chapter. But the formulation of a few basic points will help to emphasize some of the more important aspects of the discussion of the problems of education in a period of social transition.

1. In every society, the school attempts to develop the type of individual who can best function in the particular social system served by the school. Such an individual may be a religious man, a scholarly man, an economic man, or a military man, depending upon what the social system requires for its operation. But what kind of person should the school try to produce in a transition period? Should it try to produce the type of individual that will be needed in the cultural phase that has yet to be born or should it continue to develop persons suited to the old, obsolescing society? If the former, who has the authority and the wisdom to decide what kind of person will be needed? In a democratic society the people will ultimately answer these questions. But in a transition period there is seldom a majority opinion on these matters. Nevertheless, the school must continue to educate the growing generation. This is the dilemma of the teaching profession in such a period.

2. Even in a transition period, at least a few traditional beliefs still retain their old authority. The teaching profession must search for these beliefs, since they afford a basis, scant though it be, for educating in the midst of a welter of confused and contradictory values. By appealing to these traditional beliefs as a vital source of its authority, the teaching profession can justify its efforts to expand the areas of common concern and agreement through instruction. Further, by basing its instruction on these authoritative concepts and ideals, the school may convey a modicum of personal ability to its pupils while it aids them to think their way through the controversial aspects of the culture. We have seen that the common ideals still found in American society, although few in number, are, to a marked degree, both fundamental and comprehensive. If these common ideals are preserved and expanded, they may become the moral foundation of a new social consensus compatible with the changed conditions of modern life.

3. As common ideals give way, the interests and ideals of specialized groups tend to take their place. Since these groups typically identify their own interests with the

common good and use their power to shape society in accord with the public welfare as they see it, they will interpret the actions of the school as for or against the commonweal, depending upon their own interests. Hence, the program of the school must be acceptable to a large number of these groups. This means that the teaching profession must learn to cooperate with other social groups as it seeks to deal with the growing edges of the culture. In fact, the teacher can know that he is dealing with the vital aspects of the culture by the interest which the various social groups display in what he is doing. But cooperation does not imply surrender. The profession must know the values on which it will stand, beyond which it will not yield, as it works with the major social groups in our society. These values are supplied by the remaining elements of the common tradition.

4. In a transition period, the teacher must recognize that many of his pupils possess erroneous and outdated learnings based upon traditional beliefs and practices which are no longer compatible with contemporary social thought or modern social conditions. Hence, the teacher must often help pupils to overcome miseducation and teach them to recognize beliefs and ways of behaving commensurate with present social circumstances.

We have made no attempt in this chapter to answer the significant questions that have been raised. What should be the purposes of education in these times? What sort of educational program will best fulfill these purposes? To these questions we turn in the next chapter, in which a number of leading thinkers propose various educational programs in answer to the demands of the social situation as each sees it.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. Follow the record of events for several days in a daily newspaper or in a weekly news magazine and compile a list of the fundamental conflicts that are reflected in these events. What are some of the values involved in these conflicts? What bearing, if any, do these conflicts have on the school or the work of the teacher?

2. Engage your friends in discussion of educational, political, and economic questions and see whether or not they use higher and lower generalizations such as those suggested by Myrdal and illustrated by Lynd. What is the educational and social significance of these generalizations?

3. Strictly speaking, the common values suggested by Angell are categories or clusters of values. What are some of the values in each of these clusters? What use, if any, can the teacher make of these values?

4. Read the current pronouncements on education of such organizations as the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Legion, the American Federation of Labor, and the Farm Bureau Federation. Compare these organizations with respect to the educational objectives they stress. Compare their educational objectives with those of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and other teacher organizations. Does your examination of these various statements of objectives bear out the the-

sis that the school is now in a dilemma? If it is in a dilemma, what solution do you think is possible?

1. Perhaps the clearest and most penetrating analysis of American culture in transition is John Dewey's *Individualism Old and New*. This book, published more than two decades ago, is still as timely as it was in the first years after its publication. Dewey describes the shift in value orientation now going on as well as the bewilderment of the individual that results from his attempts to order his life in a time of shifting loyalties.

2. The welter of conflicting opinions among our intellectuals about the purposes of education is reflected in *Goals for American Education: A Symposium*, edited by Lyman Bryson and others. Although this symposium deals primarily with the purposes of higher education, the differences of opinion it illustrates are the same as the current differences about the purposes of the secondary school.

3. One of the best recent treatments of the ways in which the schools are affected by the tensions and anxieties attendant upon the present period of transition is *Educational Freedom in an Age of Anxiety*, edited by H. Gordon Hullfish.

Contrasting Conceptions of the Social Role of the School

The social function of the school is always related to the dominant theme of the society of which it is a part. If the chief interest of the members of a society is military conquest, the school will emphasize the attitudes and techniques of warfare. In a society primarily concerned with the salvation of the soul, the schools will stress religious beliefs and practices. In like manner, where the social ideal is industrial and commercial success, the school will give primary attention to the ideas, attitudes, and skills needed for the production and exchange of goods. In short, every school presupposes a social system, which is mirrored in the instructional program as well as in the management and operation of the school.

Moreover, both lay and professional beliefs about the function of the school are affected by the nature and extent of the social change occurring in society. In a relatively stable society there will be but little controversy about the fundamental tasks of the school. In these circumstances the educational profession will with general consent concern itself primarily with two tasks: teaching the basic tools of learning (reading, writing, arithmetic), and transmitting the knowledge, skills, and moral principles traditionally regarded as desirable.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE FUNCTION OF THE SCHOOL

On the other hand, if the society is in a state of rapid social change involving modification of its mores and institutions, beliefs about the social role of the school will reflect the uncertainties and conflicts which such changes almost always induce in the members of the society. The school will, of course, continue to emphasize in some degree the tools of learning. But rapid and profound social change creates new social needs and conditions, and these, in turn, almost always lead to a demand on the part of some indi-

viduals and groups that the school broaden its program of instruction in response to them. Thus, for example, the invention of the automobile produced traffic hazards which soon evoked persistent requests for driver and safety education.

If the school is to do anything well, however, it cannot do everything. And, in a rapidly changing society, people do not always agree about what things are the most important. Hence, as Robert and Helen Lynd have indicated in Selection 9, the expanding scope of the educational program necessarily produces conflicting points of view with regard to the proper functions of the school.

Further, changing conditions breed new ways of thinking and acting. But, as the preceding chapters have shown, these new ideas and patterns of action are not equally acceptable to all individuals and groups. Many, indeed, bitterly resent and resist them. And many others are confused and uncertain. Hence, both the members of the teaching profession and the public will be divided in their loyalties between old and new ways. Some people will insist that the school should continue to inculcate the old ideas and virtues, whereas some will feel that "modern" ideas and ideals should be fostered. Others will argue that the school should remain neutral, examining both the old and the new impartially. And still others will maintain that the school should confine itself to the accepted and the known, avoiding all controversial ideas and issues. Hence the question of what the school should do in a period of rapid and profound social change becomes one which neither the teaching profession nor the public can ignore.

It should be clear from the preceding chapters that society in the United States is now in a significant period of change. Earlier conceptions of the social role of the school have not only become blurred but are being challenged on every hand by new ideas about what the school should be doing. A number of scholars and educational leaders have proposed new programs of public education in response to a social situation marked by urbanization, social differentiation, cultural lag, and, at many points, by perplexing social contradictions and uncertainties. It is not surprising that these authorities should be in sharp disagreement with one another as to the nature of the educational program required by these new social realities. Their differences of opinion arise in part out of differing perspectives from which they view the social scene; in part out of differences in their social diagnoses; and in part out of differing conceptions of the kind of society that they prefer. Consequently, a number of contrasting conceptions of the role of the school have been proposed in response to the social circumstances described in the preceding chapters. The purpose of this chapter is to present the major views of the social role of the school current in our society.

THE TEACHER AND THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

The teacher may wonder why he should be concerned about the controversy over the social functions of the school. He may argue, with considerable logic, that, after all, his job is to teach history, mathematics, or some other academic specialty. Are not history and mathematics, like other subjects, the same regardless of the social system? If one's

aim is to teach history or mathematics, need he do more than employ such methods and materials as will best ensure that his students acquire the knowledge and skills comprising these subjects? Why, then, should the teacher, as such, concern himself about the social uncertainties, conflicts, and maladies of his time?

It is true, of course, that a person can teach even though he is uninformed about the changes taking place in society and their effects upon the school system. Such knowledge is not, unfortunately, a requirement for teaching in the public schools. Nor can it be said that such knowledge alone is sufficient to enable a person to teach anything. Thus the question is still to be answered. Why should the teacher know anything about the social role of the school?

First, most of the educational disputes now taking place in many communities center about the essential purpose of the school. In school after school, the teachers and principal are attacked by vociferous groups of citizens who think that the three R's are not given enough time, or that the conventional subjects are neglected, or that the school is not emphasizing moral and spiritual values, or that false and dangerous economic and political doctrines are being taught, or that the entire instructional program has been watered down to accommodate the average and the incompetent student. Each of these attacks reflects a public concern with what the school is attempting to do. Each one presupposes that the school should serve one function rather than another—that the role of the school is to teach the fundamental skills and the conventional subjects, or to develop moral and spiritual character, or to maintain the *status quo* or even the *status quo ante* in economics and politics, and so on. Since these attacks often reach the proportions of a major political struggle involving the professional responsibilities and the tenure of teachers, it is impossible for the teacher to stay out of the struggle. In one school system, a teacher of history, accustomed to the routine of teaching the content of his course without reference to the changing world around him, suddenly found himself in the midst of a community conflict because the textbook he was using stated that during World War II the United States and Russia were on friendly terms. In the eyes of some citizens this statement was reason to believe that the school was in danger of abandoning its function of teaching patriotism and "the truth about our enemies."

It should be clearly recognized, moreover, that the citizen has the right and the moral obligation to criticize any institution, public or private, that in his opinion is not properly performing its role. The right to criticize is as precious as the right to learn. In and of itself, criticism of the school should be encouraged, not deplored. It is true that, at the present time, many of the critics are ill informed and that their techniques frequently fall to the level of rabble-rousing. Both of these facts may be regrettable, but the right to object, to say what one thinks about the value of what is being done, is too important to be denied because of such abuses.

Those who are responsible for the management and operations of an institution must listen to the critics and answer them, if need be, with rational arguments and facts. In order to fulfill this obligation, teachers need to know what the issues are—and to understand their deeper sociological roots as well as their concrete social setting. Almost

all the significant public attitudes toward the school with respect to the social function of education are to be found in the systematic formulations of the various theories of the role of the school in society. Hence, the teacher familiar with these theories is not only in a position to understand the public attitudes and criticisms but is also better able to assess them and to respond to them intelligently. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the success of many ill-informed attacks upon the schools has been due in part to the fact that the teaching profession has not understood the contrasting conceptions of the social function of the educational system involved in such attacks.

The teacher needs to understand the social role of the school, furthermore, in order to take part in shaping the instructional program. The formulation of the purposes of instruction necessarily entails some conception of the kind of individuals the school shall attempt to build, and the nature of these individuals necessarily presupposes some kind of social system in which they are to live. Educational objectives must always be shaped in terms of how the task of the school is conceived. If the school is conceived simply as a means of passing on the cultural heritage, the objectives of instruction will be quite different from what they would be if the school were regarded as an instrument for the improvement of society or for cultivating the needs and interest of individual children. Historical instruction, for example, may emphasize—as it sometimes has emphasized—the traditions and institutions created by the founding fathers. But it could also emphasize the fact that ideas and institutions are devised to meet specific conditions and hence are usually modified or discarded when new conditions emerge.

The impact on educational policy of diverse conceptions of the social role of the school is not, however, limited to the choice of emphases within a standard set of academic subjects. They will influence the atmosphere and discipline of the school, its program of extraclass activities, and even the curriculum itself. Thus, if the primary task of the school is regarded as the cultivation of the intellectual faculties, the curriculum may stress Greek, Latin, and mathematics, whereas if its primary task is vocational education, bookkeeping, commercial law, mechanics, and agriculture will be offered. No teacher, therefore, is equipped to participate intelligently in the determination of educational policy unless he is familiar with the various theories of the social function of the school.

The teacher is a member of an organized profession. He is expected to belong to one or more teacher organizations. From time to time these organizations are required by circumstances to take definite stands on educational issues and other public questions that affect the school. Since many of these issues center in the very question of what services and activities the school shall perform, the teacher can take an intelligent part in deliberations upon these issues only if he is versed in the social role of the school.

The following, then, are some of the more significant questions which this chapter should help you to answer:

1. What are some of the more clearly formulated theories about the function of the school in modern society?

2. How are these theories related to the question of social change, conflict, and reintegration discussed in preceding chapters?

3. What kinds of relationships among men do these theories entail? Are these the sort of human relations one can accept in modern society?

4. What difference would it make in the present school system if any one of these theories were to be accepted rather than another?

The selections that make up this chapter present six theories of the social function of the school. Selection 84, from Dewey, is an introduction which emphasizes that the school is not an ivory tower, unaffected by changes in the society which it serves. The basic question, as Dewey sees it, is whether or not the part played by the school with respect to social change is to be decided through intelligent deliberation. In Selection 85, written by Hand, the school is seen as an agency through which society can help guarantee its continued progress by stressing fundamental social activities in the instructional program. The next three selections stress, in somewhat different ways, the intellectual and humanistic functions of education. It is the business of education, the authors of these selections insist, to liberate the individual through rigorous intellectual discipline. Maritain underlines, in addition, the importance of religion and of a better understanding of contemporary social problems. The final selection, from a book on curriculum development by Smith, Stanley, and Shores, presents the view that, in a period of rapid social change, the school should foster a continuous re-examination and reconstruction of our social ideals, beliefs, and institutions.

84 • *Education and Social Change*

In the present era of social change, the school can follow a number of courses. It can drift with the tide of social events without any sense of social purpose or direction. By thus failing to acquaint youth with the social issues and forces with which they must deal, it will thereby reinforce the existing social confusion and drift. In short, the school need do no more than simply ignore pressing social issues and problems in order to take the side of opportunism and drift.

If this choice is rejected, the school has two alternatives open to it. It can strengthen the forces which would reinstate the social conditions that have largely passed away. Or it can alert youth to the crucial social issues and conditions operating in contemporary American society and align itself with the scientific and technological forces moving in the direction of a new social order.

[From John Dewey, "Education and Social Change," *The Social Frontier*, 3 (May 1937): 235-238. Reprinted by permission.]

In the following passage, John Dewey, a great intellectual leader, who has been called the most typically American philosopher, rejects the first two of the courses open to the school and allies himself clearly with the last. In Dewey's view, the school can aid man in his struggle for an even better society, and it can do this without losing the objectivity of scholarship and scientific method or abandoning the canons of rigorous thought and thorough instruction.

Attention has been continually called of late to the fact that society is in process of change, and that the schools tend to lag behind. We are all familiar with the pleas that are urged to bring education in the schools into closer relation with the forces that are producing social change and with the needs that arise from these changes. Probably no question has received so much attention in educational discussion during the last few years as the problem of integration of the schools with social life. Upon these general matters, I could hardly do more than reiterate what has often been said.

Nevertheless, there is as yet little consensus of opinion as to what the schools can do in relation to the forces of social change and how they should do it. There are those who assert in effect that the schools must simply reflect social changes that have already occurred, as best they may. Some would go so far as to make the work of schools virtually parasitic. Others hold that the schools should take an active part in *directing* social change, and share in the construction of a new social order. Even among the latter there is, however, marked difference of attitude. Some think the schools should assume this directive role by means of indoctrination; others oppose this method. Even if there were more unity of thought than exists, there would still be the practical problem of overcoming institutional inertia so as to realize in fact an agreed-upon program.

There is, accordingly, no need to justify further discussion of the problem of the relation of education to social change. I shall do what I can, then, to indicate the factors that seem to me to enter into the problem, together

with some of the reasons that prove that the schools do have a role—and an important one—in *production* of social change.

One factor inherent in the situation is that schools *do* follow and reflect the social "order" that exists. I do not make this statement as a grudging admission, nor yet in order to argue that they should *not* do so. I make it rather as a statement of a *conditioning* factor which supports the conclusion that the schools thereby do take part in the determination of a future social order; and that, accordingly, the problem is not whether the schools *should* participate in the production of a future society (since they do so anyway) but whether they should do it blindly and irresponsibly or with the maximum possible of courageous intelligence and responsibility.

The grounds that lead me to make this statement are as follows: The existing state of society, which the schools reflect, is not something fixed and uniform. The idea that such is the case is a self-imposed hallucination. Social conditions are not only in process of change, but the changes going on are in different directions, so different as to produce social confusion and conflict. There is no single and clear-cut pattern that pervades and holds together in a unified way the social conditions and forces that operate.

It requires a good deal of either ignorance or intellectual naivete to suppose that these changes have all been tending to one coherent social outcome. The plaint of the conservative about the imperiling of old and time-tried values and truths, and the efforts of reactionaries to stem the tide of changes that occur,

are sufficient evidence, if evidence be needed to the contrary.

Of course the schools have mirrored the social changes that take place.

* * *

The notion that the educational system has been static is too absurd for notice; it has been and still is in a state of flux.

The fact that it is possible to argue about the desirability of many of the changes that have occurred, and to give valid reasons for deploring aspects of the flux, is not relevant to the main point. For the stronger the arguments brought forth on these points, and the greater the amount of evidence produced to show that the educational system is in a state of disorder and confusion, the greater is the proof that the schools have responded to, and have reflected, social conditions which are themselves in a state of confusion and conflict. . . .

Do those who hold the idea that the schools should not attempt to give direction to social change accept complacently the confusion that exists, because the schools *have* followed in the track of one social change after another? They certainly do not, although the logic of their position demands it. For the most part they are severe critics of the existing state of education. They are as a rule opposed to the studies called modern and the methods called progressive. They tend to favor return to older types of studies and to strenuous "disciplinary" methods. What does this attitude mean? Does it not show that its advocates in reality adopt the position that the schools can do something to affect positively and constructively social conditions? For they hold in effect that the school should discriminate with respect to the social forces that play upon it; that instead of accepting the latter *in toto*, education should select and organize in a given direction. The adherents of this view can hardly believe that the effect of selection and organization will stop at the doors of school rooms. They must expect some ordering and healing influence to be exerted sooner or later upon the structure and movement of life outside. What they are

really doing when they deny directive social effect to education is to express their opposition to some of the directions social change is actually taking, and their choice of other social forces as those with which education should throw in its lot so as to promote as far as may be their victory in the strife of forces. They are conservatives in education because they are socially conservative and vice-versa. . . .

This is as it should be in the interest of clearness and consistency of thought and action. If these conservatives in education were more aware of what is involved in their position, and franker in stating its implications, they would help bring out the real issue. It is not whether the schools shall or shall not influence the course of future social life, but in what direction they shall do so and how. In some fashion or other, the schools will influence social life anyway. But they can exercise such influence in different ways and to different ends, and the important thing is to become conscious of these different ways and ends, so that an intelligent choice may be made, and so that if opposed choices are made, the further conflict may at least be carried on with understanding of what is at stake, and not in the dark.

There are three possible directions of choice. Educators may act so as to perpetuate the present confusion and possibly increase it. That will be the result of drift, and under present conditions to drift is in the end to make a choice. Or they may select the newer scientific, technological, and cultural forces that are producing change in the old order; may estimate the direction in which they are moving and their outcome if they are given freer play, and see what can be done to make the schools their ally. Or, educators may become intelligently conservative and strive to make the schools a force in maintaining the old order intact against the impact of new forces.

If the second course is chosen—as of course I believe it should be—the problem will be other than merely that of accelerating the rate of the change that is going on. The problem will be to develop the insight and understand-

ing that will enable the youth who go forth from the schools to take part in the great work of construction and organization that will have to be done, and to equip them with the attitudes and habits of action that will make their understanding and insight practically effective. . . .

There is much that can be said for an intelligent conservatism. I do not know anything that can be said for perpetuation of a wavering, uncertain, confused condition of social life and education. Nevertheless, the easiest thing is to refrain from fundamental thinking and let things go on drifting. Upon the basis of any other policy than drift—which after all is a policy, though a blind one—every special issue and problem, whether that of selection and organization of subject-matter of study, of methods of teaching, of school buildings and equipment, of school administration, is a special phase of the inclusive and fundamental problem: What movement of social forces, economic, political, religious, cultural, shall the school take to be controlling in its aims and methods, and with which forces shall the school align itself?

Failure to discuss educational problems from this point of view but intensifies the existing confusion. Apart from this background, and outside of this perspective, educational questions have to be settled *ad hoc* and are speedily unsettled. What is suggested does not mean that the schools shall throw themselves into the political and economic arena and take sides with some party there. I am not talking about parties; I am talking about social forces and their movement. In spite of absolute claims that are made for this party or that, it is altogether probable that existing parties and sects themselves suffer

from existing confusions and conflicts, so that the understanding, the ideas, and attitudes that control their policies, need re-education and re-orientation. I know that there are some who think that the implications of what I have said point to abstinence and futility; that they negate the stand first taken. But I am surprised when educators adopt this position, for it shows a profound lack of faith in their own calling. It assumes that education as education has nothing or next to nothing to contribute; that formation of understanding and disposition counts for nothing; that only immediate overt action counts and that it can count equally whether or not it has been modified by education. . . .

Before leaving this aspect of the subject, I wish to recur to the utopian nature of the idea that the schools can be completely neutral. This idea sets up an end incapable of accomplishment. So far as it is acted upon, it has a definite social effect, but that effect is, as I have said, perpetuation of disorder and increase of blind because unintelligent conflict. Practically, moreover, the weight of such action falls upon the reactionary side. Perhaps the most effective way of re-inforcing reaction under the name of neutrality, consists in keeping the oncoming generation ignorant of the conditions in which they live and the issues they have to face. This effect is the more pronounced because it is subtle and indirect; because neither teachers nor those taught are aware of what they are doing and what is being done to them. Clarity can develop only in the extent to which there is frank acknowledgment of the basic issue: Where shall the social emphasis of school life and work fall, and what are the educational policies which correspond to this emphasis?

85 • The Case for a Common-learnings Program

In periods of profound social change, people seek for stabilizing factors in order to restore social equilibrium. Conspicuous among such stabilizing factors, as anthropologists have discovered, is the proper performance of certain social functions that are characteristic of all societies—such functions as religion, legislation, education, and the production and distribution of goods. If these functions are performed poorly, social stagnation or decay invariably results. It is only a step from this conclusion to the idea that the main task of the school is to educate the youth in such a way as to ensure that these functions will be properly performed.

The author of the following passage, a well-known student of secondary education who is primarily concerned with curriculum problems, sets forth this conception of the social role of the school. Harold C. Hand takes the position that youth should be educated in the social functions which, in his view, are essential to social stability and to the preservation and advancement of a democratic society.

Hand calls attention, too, to the educational significance of certain aspects of human development. As the individual develops from stage to stage—childhood, adolescence, adulthood—he must learn certain things required by his specific stage of development. He must learn the behavior expected of one of his age and sex; he must learn how to be independent of his family; he must learn to play the economic role of an adult; and so on. These are sometimes referred to as *developmental learnings*, and the tasks they entail as *developmental tasks*. Hence, in addition to training them in the proper performance of the basic social functions, the school must prepare its pupils to meet the demands made upon them by society at the various levels of their development from birth to death.

The case for the “common learnings” course is, in my opinion, unassailable. The argument can be simply, though not briefly, put. It runs somewhat as follows:

We start with a two-part premise, the validity of which is beyond dispute: (1) That it is the responsibility of the secondary school to aid society in carrying on their basic social processes which can be neglected only at the certain cost of societal retrogression and decay, and (2) that it is also the responsibility of the secondary school to nurture youth in reference to all types of wholesome growth—to

aid them in performing their developmental tasks and in meeting their other practical problems of “getting along” in an adequate manner. It might be added that this second responsibility can be neglected only at the certain cost of personal inadequacies (and consequent frustrations) in the pupils supposedly being “educated” by the school.

Let us make more specific each of these two responsibilities, in the order named.

If it is to escape commitment to the wastebasket of history, any given society in any given time or place must successfully carry

[From Harold C. Hand, in *Science Education*, 32 (Feb. 1948): 5-11. Reprinted by permission. Some footnotes omitted.]

forward certain basic social processes. It must enable its population to make a living. It must provide physical security for its members (in our time, this means guaranteeing the peace). It must keep its population healthy and vigorous, and safeguard its members against accidents and disease. It must develop, wisely utilize, and conserve its natural resources. It must rear and educate its young. It must enable its population to satisfy its spiritual and aesthetic impulses. It must provide recreation for its members. It must provide sufficient "social cement" (a body of commonly held beliefs and aspirations) to afford societal integration. And it must so organize and govern its population that all the other processes will successfully be carried forward in consonance with its commonly held beliefs and aspirations.

It can easily be demonstrated that the successful carrying forward of any of these basic social processes requires *learned behavior*; that each requires that the population must *understand, believe, and do* certain things rather than their opposites; hence, that the effective discharge of any and all such survival imperatives is a function of education. That only artifacts remain to remind us of some of the world's once great cultures attests the antecedent fact that their educational "systems" were inadequate to the operational demands of one or more of these necessary processes. What the hearers of these now defunct cultures needed to *know, believe, and do* in order to insure societal survival was *not* effectively educated into their nervous systems. As we have already noted, the societal consequence of such educational inadequacies is inevitably a regression through stagnation and decay to ultimate liquidation.

We turn now to a brief particularization of the second educational responsibility postulated by our premise—that of enabling all youth to achieve personal adequacy in terms of life's demands upon them.

As we have already suggested, one category of personal need in this regard derives from the fact that youths face certain demands imposed by our culture—tasks which our society requires that youth must either perform suc-

cessfully or be penalized or punished. These penalty-frightened demands begin to impinge upon the child in early childhood and continue to do so on through adolescence and adulthood until senility wins him his reprieve. Corey and others have dubbed these the "developmental tasks" (of childhood, of adolescence, of adulthood), and this aptly descriptive appellation promises to "stick."

What concerns us here are the developmental tasks of adolescents. These Corey has defined as (1) coming to terms with his own body; accepting his own body in terms of its size, shape, and rate of growing; accepting his own sex with its characteristic privileges, responsibilities and limitations; (2) achieving a new orientation to his age mates of both sexes; to learn to deal with his fellows as equals; to meet those of the opposite sex on equal terms, and eventually choose one for a husband or wife; (3) achieving independence from his family; to free himself from his dependence on his parents; ultimately, to be sufficiently "psychologically weaned" from his family to become an adequate partner in establishing a new family; (4) achieving adult economic and social status; acquiring the ability to hold down a job; putting aside childish ways and accepting responsibility as a citizen; (5) acquiring self-confidence and a system of values; becoming a mature person as our culture defines the term.

As we note this list of developmental tasks, it is apparent that each requires the learning of new attitudes, the acquiring of new understandings, the building of new skills, and the engendering of new modes of behavior—*learned responses* all. The successful performance of each developmental task is thus a function of education. Either the adolescent learns what must be learned, or he fails to achieve the developmental adjustments which these tasks connote. One has but to reflect on the penalties certain to be imposed upon any boy or girl who fails in this regard to appreciate how imperative it is that the secondary school build into the nervous systems of youth the requisite understandings, beliefs, and predispositions to behavior.

There are many types of practical help

which youth need in order to "get along" adequately. Most of these are directly related to the developmental tasks just discussed, but all are needed if the boys and girls are to make the most of their lives. Each of these types of help is completely educational in nature, as the following partial list will demonstrate: Securing needed vocational information, help in choosing an appropriate occupation, securing needed vocational training, help in choosing appropriate school subjects and student activities, help in deciding whether or not to go to college or a trade or other vocational school, help in choosing such a school should the decision be to go, learning how to get a job, help in actually getting a job, learning how to buy wisely, learning how to prevent accidents and care for one's health, learning how to improve one's personal appearance, acquiring the good manners associated with poise and self-confidence, learning how to get along happily and effectively with other people, acquiring good work habits and learning how to "stick to" a job, learning how to communicate (speak, write, read, listen) more effectively and enjoyably, learning how to select and to enjoy good books, newspapers, magazines, motion pictures and radio programs, learning how to sing or play a musical instrument and to enjoy good music, learning some handicraft or other enjoyable manual skill, learning enjoyable games and sports, developing a hobby, developing intellectual interests and becoming a more cultivated person, becoming literate in reference to community, national, and world problems and developing the interest and ability to participate in resolving them, and preparing for a happy marriage, intelligent home management and wise parenthood.

Unless our educational program is to be of the ivory tower variety, all of the learning experiences connoted by these practical life-needs of youth must be provided by our secondary schools.

Perhaps we have said enough to demonstrate the validity of the two-part premise with which we began; namely, that it is the responsibility of the secondary school (1) to

aid society in carrying forward the basic social processes essential for societal survival and (2) to give all the types of practical help which youth need in order to "get along" adequately. At any rate, we shall rest this part of our case at this point.

The next part of the case for the common learnings course will consist of a demonstration of the fact that *both* of these two responsibilities are seriously neglected, and inevitably so, by the traditional broad field area approach (the curriculum structured as English, social studies, science, mathematics, modern languages, etc.—the traditional subjects of "general education").

Let us first note some of the evidence bearing on the established fact of this neglect. The most biting general appraisal is that made by the Educational Policies Commission:

Setting: A democracy struggling against strangulation in an era marked by confused loyalties in the political realm, by unrest and deprivation, by much unnecessary ill health, by high-pressure propaganda, by war, by many broken or ill-adjusted homes, by foolish spending, by high crime rates, by bad housing, and by a myriad of other urgent real human problems. And what are the children in this school, in this age, in this culture, learning? They are learning that the square of the sum of two numbers equals the sum of their squares plus twice their product; that Millard Fillmore was the thirteenth President of the United States and held office from January 10, 1850 to March 4, 1853; that the capital of Honduras is Tegucigalpa; that there were two Peloponnesian wars and three Punic wars; that Latin verbs meaning to command, obey, please, displease, serve, resist, and the like, take the dative; and that a gerund is a neuter verbal noun used in the oblique cases of the singular and governing the same case as its verb.¹

That this impressionistic appraisal is probably uncomfortably close to the mark is at-

¹ Educational Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*, p. 147.

tested by the findings of the New York Regents Inquiry, a study in which the investigators went directly to school-leaving youth to find out what they believed, knew, and did. It was found that the high school characteristically gave little or no help to these youth in finding jobs, that these pupils typically had educational and vocational plans which were strikingly unrealistic, that they showed little discrimination in selecting radio programs and motion pictures, that they voluntarily read little other than mediocre books—and very few even of these, that they were seriously deficient in their knowledge of the facts and problems with which citizens should be concerned, that they were uninformed about social conditions even in their own communities, that they had little tolerance for new ways of dealing with social problems, and that the longer they had been in school the less disposed they were to do anything for the common good.

The boys and girls in this study were, however, found to be reasonably well acquainted with the standard school selections such as "The Raven," "Quentin Durward," and Cooper's stories about Indians—a finding which gives further damning point to the acid characterization by the Educational Policies Commission.

Another very distressing finding was that most of the youth did *not* regard the school as a place where one got help with any of life's real problems.

In summarizing, the Director wrote in part as follows:

The average New York State high school is now geared to do one kind of a job. and only one. It takes the boys and girls who are fed into it . . . and starts them on a four-year round of drill and memorization. . . . The examinations have little to do—directly, at least—with the abilities which boys and girls need outside of school. . . . Nor does the school's method of preparing for the examinations have any direct relation to out-of-school matters. . . . It fixes its attention on a kind of performance which has little meaning except in aca-

demic circles. . . . They (the schools) fail to make their pupils ready for definitely predictable out-of-school requirements and opportunities, chiefly because they do not systematically concern themselves with any such matters.²

There is, of course, no good reason for supposing that the secondary schools of New York State are any worse than those of most other states. This generalization is borne out by the disturbing findings of a study conducted by the present writer in another state. This study embraced all the seniors in 15 high schools, and as many of the recent graduates of these schools as could be induced to participate in the study. Each pupil and ex-pupil was asked to tell how much help he had received from his school in reference to some 35 types of practical, real-life needs. Included among these types of needs were all of those utilized for illustrative purposes in the tenth paragraph of this article. For neither group was the average of the ratings for all types of help combined higher than that section of the scale labeled "some help, but not sufficient." In reference to but one type of help did these young people say that they had received "considerable, but not sufficient help." Not a single item was rated "sufficient help" by either group.

No study in which the investigators actually went to the pupils has been reported which gives one any reason for believing that the appraisals noted in the preceding paragraphs are invalid for the generality of American high schools. On the contrary, other studies in which the investigators did go to the pupils and which support these distasteful generalizations could be placed in evidence here if space permitted. What this all adds up to is the fact that our reliance upon the traditionally structured high school curriculum—i.e., upon English, social studies, science, mathematics, etc., taught as separate subjects or broad field areas—has resulted in a gross neglect of the two basic responsibilities laid down as "musts" in our premise.

² Francis T. Spaulding, *High School and Life*, pp. 252-253.

Now let us examine *why* it is that we get these unfortunate results.

In the first place, the traditional subjects were never designed to meet either of the two responsibilities noted in our premise. Instead, each is organized according to its own inner logic. This logic is but little concerned with either of the two responsibilities noted. The essence of these two responsibilities is the resolving of real-life problems, societal and personal, whereas the inner logic of the traditional subjects permits such real-life problems to be treated but *incidentally*, if at all. The skeptical reader is urged to consult virtually any standardized test in any of these traditional subject areas for verification. Or he might scrutinize any one of the National Teachers Examinations.

In consequence of this conflict of inner logic—i.e., the inner logic of real-life-problem-solving vs. the inner logic of standard subjects which at best admits of but incidental attention to such problems—efforts to “functionalize” the traditional high school subjects invariably and inevitably result in asking the teacher simultaneously to serve two contrarily-oriented masters. That this is frustrating in the extreme, there can be little doubt—as any number of intelligent and conscientious teachers will testify. What is more important, the traditional master almost invariably wins out in this unhappy and unequal struggle—to the educational neglect of society and youth, as we have demonstrated. If the course is labeled “English,” or “social studies” or any other name identified with a recognized body of more or less standard subject matter, the teacher is conscience-stricken unless he gets across at least a respectable minimum of whatever this subject matter may be. This he will usually do regardless of the fate of the problems with which he is also supposed to be dealing. But this neglect of problems also induces feelings of guilt, it must be recognized. What this adds up to is scarcely a recipe for good mental health.

Let us suppose, however, that by some magic this conflict of inner logics could be resolved and that every one of the traditional subjects

or broad field areas could be 100-percent functionalized. Even with such a program of 100-percent functionalized subjects, it would still be impossible for any school to discharge either of the two responsibilities noted in our premise. This would be true because no societal or youth problem of any real significance can be understood, much less resolved, by appeal to the resources which any one of the subject matter fields could afford. Instead, every such problem requires various of the resources of several of the usual subject fields plus certain others not afforded by any broad field area now included in the high-school curriculum. Let the skeptical reader take any important real-life problem he chooses and in terms of subject fields trace out what it would take to make youth even literate in reference to the problem. Then let him note what it would take to equip youth to effect the individual and/or social action necessary to resolve this problem.

From what has just been noted, it might mistakenly be assumed that the two basic responsibilities laid down in our premise could be discharged if two, three, or more of the traditional subjects were combined in some manner and teams of say English, social studies, and science teachers were to instruct jointly. This brings into conflict not two but eight inner logics; namely, that of English *vs.* that of social and personal problem solving, social studies *vs.* problem solving, science *vs.* problem solving, English *vs.* social studies, English *vs.* science, and social studies *vs.* science. So long as there is any presumption that respectable minima of English, social studies and science will be taught in such hybrid situations (in schools where this type of programming is practiced the work is not uncommonly separately recorded in the front office as English, social studies and science), the stage would appear to be set for teacher *vs.* teacher as well as standard subject matter *vs.* problem solving conflicts of no inconsequential order. We are guilty of understatement when we say that this does *not* appear to be the way to meet the twin responsibilities laid down in our premise.

Nothing remains except to provide in each year of the high school a required offering which makes a *direct* attack on societal and youth problems, which has no responsibility other than this, which is called by a name in no way identified with any existing body of standard subject matter, and which utilizes whatever resources it takes to do the job. This is precisely what is connoted by the term "common learnings course" as employed in this paper.

Of what "whole" should this new offering be a part? In other words, what would the total operating program of the secondary school which included such a required offering look like? Here is the "total picture" as it is visualized:

1. *Common Learnings Course*—Two hours per day in all secondary school years through grade 11. One hour per day in grade 12. Required of all pupils.

2. *Health and Physical Education Activities*—One hour per day in all years. Required of all pupils.

3. *Standard Specialized Subjects* (English, biology, mathematics, vocational courses, etc.)—Elective under guidance except in exceptional cases. Required only on the basis of demonstrated pupil need in individual cases.

4. *Guidance and Personnel Services*—(What is ordinarily called group guidance would be included in number one above.) Special provisions as needed for exceptional pupils. Testing program. Counseling of referrals. Record keeping and reporting.

5. *Activities Period*—One hour daily, alternately given to clubs, assemblies, intramurals, band, orchestra, glee club, etc.

Before turning to a somewhat detailed discussion of the common learnings course, it might be well to lay one ghost to rest. From the earlier discussion some of our readers may have been led to believe that we see no value in the standard subjects of the high school. This is not true. We believe that every pupil will have various special interests and/or needs which can best be met through special-

ized courses. To illustrate, many pupils have vocational needs which can only be met through various types of vocational courses. College preparatory pupils variously require highly systematic courses in science, mathematics, social science, foreign languages, and English which are geared to their needs and higher level of capabilities. Other pupils have non-college preparatory interests in these and other specialized subjects, and so on. Our apparent cavil against the standard subjects is more apparent than real. What we have by inference complained about above is rather the fruitless attempt to make these subjects serve basically important purposes which they were never intended to meet and which they can never adequately fulfil except as the pursuit of the values which they severally typify is abandoned. Clearly, the question is *not* whether we should have the common learnings course *or* specialized subjects. We need *both*.

Let us now become a little more explicit about the common learnings course. This required offering would be completely problem-centered, and the problems treated would in every instance be real. Although they would necessarily have to be respectably literate in reference to these problems in order to guide youth effectively, neither the teachers nor anybody else would know the final "answers" or "solutions" to any of the problems dealt with.

The "content" of this course would derive from (1) the unresolved problems variously associated with the effective carrying out of the basic social processes essential for societal survival, and (2) the common real-life personal problems of the youth group in question.

In reference to the first type of "content," the school would obviously have to restrict its choice to those which it believed to be most important, then narrow this selection still further to include only those which the maturity levels of the various grade groups would sanction as sensible to attack. Each category of societal problems to be included should first be broken down into meaningful wholes

(parts), and each such meaningful whole problem (part of a more inclusive problem) first assigned to the grade level at which it is sufficiently within the experience of the age group in question to justify its consideration by pupils in that particular grade. Serial consideration at different grade levels should be provided as necessity or desirability might warrant.

The second type of "content" should be selected in a similar manner. The commonly experienced real-life problems of the pupils in question should obviously be placed at the various grade levels corresponding to the age groups to whom they first became real. Time limitations would undoubtedly force the school to be selective—obviously, those problems deemed most important should be scheduled for attack in preference to those of less significance in the lives of youth. Serial treatment of these more important problems should be provided to the extent and at the age levels deemed necessary or desirable.

In sum, so far as the maturity of the pupils and the time available would permit, all of the meaningful components of each major problem category which should be included in the common learnings course would thus be allocated to one or more grade levels. What we have outlined is simply a common sense plan to guarantee that no important societal or personal problem will be omitted unless ruled out by considerations of lack of time or inadequate pupil maturity, and to ensure so far as possible that all problems which are included will be meaningfully treated.

That the common learnings course calls for a new type of teaching means among other things that certain steps must be taken to safeguard the psychic security of the teacher. One essential safeguard is to assure that no subject-matter-expectation club be permitted to hang over his head. The other requisite has to do with instructional materials. To force or even to permit a teacher to embark upon this type of teaching without adequate teaching materials is to court disaster both to the

course and to the teacher's emotional health. A resource unit must be constructed (or adopted or adapted if already available) in reference to each problem or problem-cluster selected for inclusion in the course. In the construction of each resource unit, teachers from all broad field areas should participate in defining the behavioral statement of objectives to be striven for, in designing a rich variety of suggested learning experiences geared thereto, and in building a list of fruitful teaching-learning materials.

Because this is a changing world, and because this course is designed to make pupils literate in reference to the more important unresolved problems of such a world, the common learnings course must undergo continuous revision. As societal changes occur and new problems emerge, these must be included. As old problems are resolved, these must be dropped. These changes necessitate the building of new resource units and the abandonment of others. And as the character of the pupil population changes—or as the conditions which the pupils confront change—new commonly experienced personal problems will emerge and old ones drop out of the picture. Again, new or revised resource units should mirror the changed needs.

We shall conclude with a few words epitomizing the potential significance of the common learnings course. Never in history has so much hinged on the race between education and catastrophe. Seldom, if ever, has education been so out-distanced by its frightful competitor as it now so clearly is. Either those who educate must quickly succeed in creating many types of new mind (new attitudes, beliefs, understandings, skills, and pre-dispositions to behavior) or man will become the victim instead of the master of the urgent problems he now confronts both at home and abroad. In such a context, the common learnings course (already established in embryo form in some schools) may easily prove to be the most important social invention in the history of secondary education to date.

86 • Education as a Social Elevator

In one form or another, helping the individual to find the place in the social structure for which his ability best fits him has often been an avowed aim of education. It was, for example, clearly espoused by Plato in *The Republic*. With modifications that allow for the uniqueness and wide range of abilities of each individual, and for changes in the social pattern, this principle has been incorporated into the democratic ideal of education. But when the social structure is believed to be a fixed and rigid hierarchy to which each individual must learn to accommodate himself at the expense of his individuality, the democratic character of this educational conception is lost. The passage which follows reaffirms the selective function of education, and the reader may decide for himself whether or not it is, as here presented, consistent with the democratic ideal.

W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb insist in this passage that the school must select able individuals and prepare them to move up in the social-class structure. Inequalities of opportunity can be alleviated by scholarships and other forms of assistance to capable individuals. In this way, handicaps due to the accident of birth may be considerably overcome. For all practical purposes, individuals can then compete on equal terms in the race of life in so far as education is a determining factor.

These authors hold that what the school can and should do is determined in large measure by the mores of the people. The class structure, they argue, is a significant aspect of the social realities governing American life. Hence an education based upon an egalitarian, classless ideal is not only futile but dangerous as well, for it creates false expectations and thus produces maladjusted and unhappy persons. All the school can do—and all it should do—is to help young people of character and ability to rise in the social scale to a place commensurate with their social worth.

It is now time to draw a few generalizations which will provide us with a set of principles on which we shall then build our recommendations. In reaching these conclusions and in suggesting a program of action we are guided by democratic values. We have asked ourselves how democratic values may be better realized in the lives of Americans through education, always taking into account the facts of the social organization of our country.

To make democracy work in our complex modern society it is essential that a high order

of technical and civic competence exist at all social levels. Teaching such skills—technical, as well as social—is increasingly the responsibility of the schools. The individuals who exercise these skills should be the products of a superior native capacity, trained by highly competent instructors, and so placed after training that they can adequately employ their abilities. Wherever individuals with ability of one kind or another are found the schools must recognize their native endowments, train them, and reward them. To do

[From W. Lloyd Warner, Robert J. Havighurst and Martin B. Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated?* Harper and Bros., 1944, pp. 141-148, 157-158. Used by permission of the publishers.]

less invites filling critical positions in governmental and private organizations with incompetents who do not possess the skills necessary to do their jobs. Malfunctioning of the democratic order because of mere technical inadequacies is an important factor in arousing a questioning attitude toward democracy as a way of life; and indeed, if democracy is incapable of recruiting and training properly qualified people to do its work, there is strong reason for such skepticism.

. . . The present method of screening the able from those of less ability is not satisfactory. Some of the children in our lower social levels are endowed with high capacities. At present many of these children leave school early, discouraged by disappointing experiences and lack of recognition. They quit before receiving the training which would permit them to contribute their best to our life. This is personally frustrating to them and socially wasteful. A new system of selection and encouragement must be developed which will keep these children in school and allow them to compete with those above them on the social ladder. To do its job this selective system must operate at all social levels; it must be particularly adapted to the lower ones, for most of our people are in them.

If America is to maintain its democratic way of life, a larger number of people with ability must function competently in all parts of our life. We must use fully all our human resources if we are to have the necessary personnel to administer efficiently the work that society must have done.

There is enough native ability in America to provide the skilled individuals who are needed to solve our problems. It is demonstrable that some of the ills of the present are directly traceable to our failure to use trained people. Because of our status system we have maintained many people of inferior ability and training in responsible jobs who should have been eliminated to permit competent people to rise from lower levels to fill these higher places. We must spread our net wider to find people of talent wherever they exist and we must permit them to compete with everyone for the prized positions. The re-

wards of talent and hard work must be made more secure and more sure.

The job of social engineering which will give efficient form to what we propose will demand more than mere mechanical changes. The educational problem is moral as well as technical. The American schools must recognize this fact. There must be a basic core of moral experience incorporated in curricula to equip sub-adults with codes which will permit them to act with moral understanding of themselves and others and make them feel their responsibility to society. America as the "Promised Land" has become a symbol of privileges and rights to its citizens and immigrants. "What's in it for me?" and "What can I get out of it?" are guiding principles of too many people who educate themselves like a burglar preparing for a safe robbery by acquiring sharp and powerful tools to crack the bank of opportunity.

Until our schools allow all our children to learn their responsibilities and obligations to themselves and others and until our professional schools recognize the necessity of indoctrinating their pupils with codes of ethics to guide professional practice we will continue turning out moral imbeciles who are as incapable of doing their jobs as the technical incompetents. It is imperative that when we recruit young men and women for high positions character as well as ability be made of prime importance. Until it becomes clear to young people as they progress through our schools and colleges that good character has its own rewards there will continue to be more emphasis on privilege and less on duty in their thinking about their life careers. The school is not, however, the only institution which could be used to improve democratic living. All other American institutions, such as the church, government, and associations, must assume their full share of responsibility.

As long as we have our present social structure education must be adapted to it or we will produce a generation or more of maladjusted children and unhappy adults. The school in America, whether we like it or not, must function to make democracy work in a status system that is only partially equali-

tarian. Only as our social order changes can the school indoctrinate its pupils with economic and political philosophies of human relationship which are now in sharp conflict with the prevailing social system. The thesis of some educators that American schools should be the instruments of propaganda for a particular type of economic or political thought is wrong and must be discouraged. Although the guiding philosophy of such propagandists may be democratic, the methods advanced are unreal and dangerous. Propaganda education that conflicts with the prevailing mores produces conflict in the lives of those taught and does not provide growing children with a realistic orientation to the social world in which they must compete for a living and for status.

In a complex society in which education must take account of social change and prepare youth for it, teaching does not mean indoctrination for specific and set traditional goals. Most of our present belief in hard and fast rules of democracy and our assumption that the present or any other social order is immutable and eternal are dangerous precepts to pass on to those who grow up in a changing world. The school must educate for enough flexibility in the student's outlook to encourage him to expect social change and to help him direct it and accommodate it to his own and other people's lives as the occasion demands. This is but another way of saying that education must fit reasonably well into the prevailing social structure—in this case a changing one—or result in maladjustment of children.

When first confronted with the fact of a class order in our country many Americans feel compelled by their sentiments to disbelieve the evidence and minimize its significance. The indoctrination of childhood is too strong for objective weighing of facts so that they can arrive at sound conclusions. Other people do accept the fact of unequal status as true and demand complete abolition of our status structure and the substitution of pure democracy. Once again democratic fictions acquired in early training betray their efforts to think clearly, for it is impossible to wipe

out our status structure. Those who hold that economic reorganization is desirable are fond of saying that if all economic differences between people were destroyed and the means of production were communally owned by the group this would result in equality for all and a pure democracy. They are mistaken. It is true that unequal distribution of economic goods and the private control of the means of production are powerful and necessary factors in the maintenance of our *present form* of class order. Were they abolished, radical reorganization of the *form* of our status system would inevitably occur. But it is equally sure that pure democracy could not be born through such a change and it is certain that it would not produce an equalitarian status system. When Soviet Russia abolished the capitalistic, czaristic regime it destroyed one form of rank but immediately substituted a new one through use of such forms of rank as the party hierarchy, the differential evaluation of occupations, and the superior and inferior military orders within the Red army and navy.

Any country with a huge heterogeneous population, with many cultures, many regional variations, and countless world-wide affiliations must have a series of hierarchies which organize power and prestige within the social structure if order is to be maintained. To integrate all of the several groups in a factory it is necessary for a hierarchy of control to be established. This is many times more true for a large country, since not one but many hierarchies are necessary if the work of the community is to continue. Social equivalence of corresponding positions among the many hierarchies is recognized: for example, in Russia men of top status in the army and of similar position in the diplomatic corps, the school system, and the economic order, as well as the higher ranking artists, tend to be classed together in a superior general rank, as opposed to those in each of these hierarchies who are at the bottom. The latter tend to be classed as belonging to an inferior group. This produces higher and lower social levels of the class type. At present the Russian hierarchies permit greater mobility, have less social dis-

tance from top to bottom, and provide fewer mechanisms for individuals or families to maintain high social status. There is greater emphasis on rewarding the individual and his family with prestige for services rendered to society than in the United States.

The purely equalitarian state is a luxury enjoyed by only the most simple and primitive groups because their populations are small enough and their problems of sufficient simplicity to permit it. The decision to be made by those who disapprove of our present inequality and who wish to change it is not between a system of inequality and equality; the choice is among various systems of rank. Efforts to achieve democratic living by abolishing the social system are utopian and not realistic. The remedy for the present ills is certainly not to try to abolish the whole existing structure. It would be impossible to destroy most of our major status differences without violent revolution. There are few who would go this far. Most people want to maintain some form of the present structure. To be practical those who favor drastic change must accept some type of hierarchy as a substitute for the present one. The rest of us must recognize the general fact of hierarchy, and we must work out a procedure which will make our hierarchical system best serve democratic values.

With the recognition of these facts it is now possible to continue our discussion of educating Americans for democratic living. Some kind of elite is present in any complex society. A highly trained and intelligent elite will serve society best when rewarded by positions of esteem and privilege.

The demand by those who reach places of prestige and power that their children keep the social place of the parents is the real problem of hierarchy in democracy. The question arises to what extent children should retain positions of prestige earned by their parents. Our answer is that such positions should be passed on from parents to children with reasonable assurance, but that the competition from below should be such that a large pro-

portion of these jobs would be yielded to the socially mobile from lower positions. In other words, those from the bottom should be given more than a fighting chance to compete with those above them. The children of parents in superior positions should not be penalized because they have been fortunate enough to have been born to such parents, but it should not be assumed that they can inherit the right to continue in the same positions. To advocate less flexibility would mean a closed class order where no one could rise; to advocate more would lead to complete change of position in each generation, which would violate some of the sentiments that dominate all men and would lead to social chaos.

If such a system were adopted, fewer of the unfit who inherit opportunities to get the education necessary to maintain themselves in high positions would succeed, for the competition from some of those rising from below who were more able and just as well trained would defeat them. There would be greater turnover in the acceptance and distribution of positions than we now have but the transfer would be regulated and ordered. Consequently, there would be an increase in the use of available talent and the encouragement of those trained for all forms of life. In any society like ours there is room for only a few at the top. The saying "There is plenty of room at the top" is fiction in any society which is not expanding rapidly. Therefore, in America the concept of competition must be rephrased, for our society is no longer expanding rapidly. The belief that everyone who can should aim for the top means frustration for many and unnecessary defeat in the lives of those who with less ambitious aims could have achieved a satisfying success. We believe Americans should recognize and reward less ambitious but socially important goals. We believe the top should be widened as much as possible and should be open to all, but we believe that it should be stressed and made explicit to everyone that the number of people with qualifications for these top goals is quite small. It should be also stressed that there are other worth-while goals and that the country respects those who occupy them.

All of us—parents, young people, and teachers—need to understand the fact of social mobility more clearly. It is an important part of our American tradition and should remain, but it should be better understood. We need to understand that the goal of those who are rising in our society is social as well as economic. We need to see more clearly that various subgroups in our society can aim at different goals and that it is not necessary for everyone to shoot for the top. With this clear view of social mobility we could adopt more explicit methods of recognizing and encouraging ambition in talented individuals. The school seems clearly to be the instrument best suited for making social mobility a better understood and more clearly defined activity.

Together with providing for the upward movement of individuals who deserve to rise in our social system, we should provide for some flattening of the social pyramid by improving our system of distributing goods and services. It is clear that the economic level of the lower classes must be raised. This does not mean that we can abolish the lower levels of our society. It only means that individuals of the lower strata will get more of the things people want and deserve. It is now not only morally desirable but also technically possible to raise the economic level of the lower group, since our present technology is capable of producing all that is needed and wanted by everyone. Yet we have many people who are not getting the basic necessities for existence. The last two wars have demonstrated that our technology when given the proper stimulus can produce beyond anything dreamed of in previous times. Instead of modifying our system of distribution to produce a more satisfying social adaptation for everyone, we have insisted on clinging to an economy that was developed for a discarded technology, an economy that is inadequate and incapable of producing enough for everyone.

If our way of life is to be maintained we must modify our economic structure sufficiently to permit the full social use of our technological system. As long as we were technically incapable of producing an adequate income for everyone the philosophy of

scarcity which still permeates our society was adaptive, moral, and realistic. Today we know we have the technical skill to produce enough to satisfy the needs of everyone. The problem is social, not technical. Our democratic social order will not continue to tolerate such a state of affairs. When scarcity was necessary, we could demand only what was then possible. Now that abundance is possible, democratic morality must insist upon and obtain an economic order that will produce and distribute enough to satisfy the needs of everyone. Until these changes are reached we will continue to be an unsettled and disunited people.

* * *

All these facts tend to show that upward social mobility is a scarce article and all the more valuable in the eyes of many people because of its scarcity. They also tend to show that the school system has severe limitations as a social elevator. Its capacity is limited, and it is not free.

Nevertheless, the American school and college system is the greatest agency we have for equalizing opportunity and for promoting the rise of able young people. Through it we maintain a degree of social mobility probably greater than that to be found in any other country.

The educational system promotes social solidarity, or social cohesion, partly through its provisions for social mobility. A society has social solidarity when its members believe that they have a substantial common ground of interest—that they gain more than they lose by sticking together and maintaining intact their political and social institutions. A certain amount of social mobility seems necessary to maintain social cohesion in our class-structured society. The possibility of rising in the social scale in order to secure a larger share of the privileges of the society makes people willing to "stick together" and "play the game" as long as they believe it gives them a fair deal. Yet social mobility must be limited if it is to be valuable. A large measure of it would spell revolution or social chaos.

Thus it appears that social solidarity in a society like that of America is fostered by so-

cial mobility if the latter is kept within limits. Too little social mobility would give rise to widespread dissatisfaction and to attempts to change the social order by violence. Too much social rise and fall would produce a chaotic society in which few would care to co-operate socially with others because the rewards would be so fleeting.

Educators, therefore, should try to adjust the educational system so that it produces a degree and kind of social mobility that is within the limits which will keep the society healthy and alive. But here is where they face a dilemma. They are under constant pressure

to educate too many to rise in the economic scale. The American people, believing in a myth of unlimited social mobility, send their children to high school and college as speedways to place and power. If the educators attempt to regulate traffic, they are accused of being undemocratic, and they may lose the confidence of the public. Yet there is clear evidence that our educational system is now permitting too many to use high school and college for the purpose of attaining unavailable professional and managerial positions, with resultant failure and frustration and loss of social solidarity.

87 • *Traditional Subjects as the Basis of Education*

One of the oldest and most pervasive conceptions of the purpose of the school is that of teaching the content of the traditional academic subjects. Even in a period of rapid social change, such as that in which we are now living, many educators believe that the mastery of these subjects is the core of any genuine program of education.

In ancient and medieval times, the recognized school subjects were the seven liberal arts—grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. Every educated man was expected to master all of these subjects. Even as late as the eighteenth century, it was still possible for an exceptionally able student to be at home in all of the recognized fields of knowledge. Since then, however, knowledge has grown at an ever-accelerating pace. There are now more than three hundred and fifty subjects offered in the high schools and more than two thousand in universities and colleges. Obviously, not even the greatest scholar can sample all of these subjects—to say nothing of mastering them. Today, scholarship means specialization rather than breadth. The growth of knowledge with its concomitant multiplication of subjects has raised again, in a new form, the old question of general education: What knowledge is of most worth for the man and the citizen? The following excerpt, from a work by John MacDonald, is an attempt to formulate an answer to this question in terms of modern social conditions but with due regard to the integrity of the conventional subjects.

The traditional subjects of the curriculum represent fields of study which give opportunity for the expression and cultivation of basic interests, but, unless these subjects are

[From John MacDonald, *Mind, School and Civilization*, pp. 85-94, by permission of the University of Chicago Press. Copyright 1952 by the University of Chicago. Footnotes omitted.]

deliberately used for that purpose, there is no assurance that they will function in that way.

An educational program based on subjects and made up of a varied pattern of scientific, sociological, historical, philosophical, and literary studies can look broad and general, and yet in actual fact it may be narrow and lopsided. It would seem that general education must largely be a hit-or-miss affair. Can anything be done by way of remedy? In particular, must we reject the traditional division into subjects and organize education on some other basis?

That would be going too far. The so-called "subjects" are not just irrational structures transmitted by tradition. They rest on principles of organization which have their own ample justification. History rests on our interest in the past, mathematics on our interest in quantity as such, botany on our interest in plant life, and so on. In each subject there is a clear-cut primary aim which is the basis of its identity as a distinct discipline. The term "areas," a favorite one with professional writers on education, does not help us here. "Areas" is a reminder that the *boundaries* separating one subject from another should not be made artificially rigid. At the more primary levels, where the one-subject-one-teacher arrangement does not obtain, it is an important reminder. At the higher levels, however, where the teacher is expected to talk as one with authority—the authority of the specialist—the need is different. What is needed here is a greater measure of sophistication than the teacher usually possesses in regard to the potential educational values not only of his own subject but of the other subjects that constitute the curriculum. In short, he needs a philosophy of education to broaden and clarify his vision.

In particular, there is one distinction with which he is quite familiar but with regard to which his thinking is probably not too clear. This is the distinction between the sciences and the humanities. Clear thinking on this point will help him greatly, particularly in assessing the value of curriculums that are designed for general education. There is no

serious ambiguity in the term "sciences," but the term "humanities" needs clarification.

As originally used, it designated all studies other than theological studies. In the Middle Ages, theology held the place of central importance. Nontheological interests found their expression in two quarters. First, there were the literatures of Greece and Rome, especially the writings of Aristotle, to which the church itself attached great importance. Second—and for a long time very much suspect—there was modern science, then in its beginnings. According to this usage, science was numbered with the humanities. The usage has long since disappeared, though an interesting relic of it is to be found in certain universities which refer to their faculties of theology as faculties of "Divinity" and designate Latin by the word "humanity."

In our own day, there is a tendency in some quarters to use the term "humanities" to denote specifically the study of languages, especially languages as literature. "Humanities" is identified with "belles-lettres." This seems unduly to narrow the meaning of the term, and, moreover, the restriction seems to have no logical justification.

The only clear and logical division would seem to be that between scientific and non-scientific studies—in other words, between science, on the one hand, and art, philosophy, and religion, on the other. Let us look at the basis of this division.

. . . Science rests on the assumption that there is an objective world. . . . The phenomena it studies are regarded as existing in their own right, independently of human beings. Science is concerned with the true, as distinct from the beautiful and the good, and for science the true means an accurate account of this objective world. The values with which art and philosophy are concerned—the values implied by the terms "beautiful" and "ugly," "good" and "bad," "right" and "wrong"—represent human reactions to the external world, not qualities it possesses in its own right. They are *subjective* phenomena. The only objection to the use of the word "subjective" to describe them is that it might suggest that they are somehow not *real*. On

the contrary, the artist's feelings as he looks at a beautiful sunset or the humane man's feelings at the sight of human or animal suffering are just as real as the objective facts which the scientist would see in either case. It is merely a different kind of reality.

The difference, however, must always be kept in mind. Certain influences have tended to obscure it. Reference has already been made to the contention of scientists that science is just as humanistic as philosophy or art. All that this amounts to is the contention that science was created by human beings and possesses interest and significance for human living. Human beings have come to realize—it took them a long time to do it—that there is an objective world, a world existing in its own right. They are interested in acquiring knowledge about it, but the fact that it is an objective world makes a great difference to the manner in which that knowledge will be acquired. It is one thing to say that good teaching will make clear the significance of science for modern living. It is quite another thing—a very misleading thing—to say that science, in being thus presented, becomes one of the humanities. The humanities are concerned primarily not with the objective world but with the human being as such.

It might be objected that philosophy has traditionally been concerned with precisely the same issue with which science deals, namely, the nature of the objective world. Philosophy was identified with this quest—indeed, had grown old in it—long before science came into being. Philosophy has therefore no better claim than has science to be classed with the humanities.

It is true that philosophers, from Thales to—may we say?—Whitehead have speculated on this subject. But it has been *speculation*. Scientific inquiry, on the other hand, is tied to the objective world in a manner in which philosophy is not. The scientist, also, speculates or “guesses,” but his guesses (scientific hypotheses) are governed by one inexorable demand: they must be such that, in principle, they admit of being verified or rejected by further investigation of the objective world. Otherwise, they are worthless. The philoso-

pher can give his imagination free rein; the resulting constructs are subject only to the test of abstract logic. This difference in the manner in which philosophy and science carry on the quest is sufficient to stamp them as essentially different pursuits. If it has happened that the philosopher's speculations have in certain cases come very close to anticipating theories which science later arrived at by its own methods, that is just a curious fact of the history of philosophy (and of science). It may be added that the difference of procedure just referred to is merely the result of a basic difference of aim: philosophy, as pointed out in an earlier passage, has in view a wider synthesis which will find room not only for the facts of the objective world (which it looks to science to reveal) but for the experiences that constitute the ethical, religious, and artistic life. It is in virtue of this comprehensive mission that philosophy is rated among the humanities.

So much for the distinction between the sciences and the humanities. It remains to consider the precise status of certain other pursuits which have not been mentioned in the above analysis. These are the so-called “social sciences”: sociology, economics, social psychology, political science, history. The matter of their status has given rise to a good deal of confusion—confusion not only of thought but of practice. It would appear that these represent a region of culture lying between the sciences and the humanities and serving to connect them. Here scientific and nonscientific values operate together. Let us note, however, what exactly this means.

It does not mean that there is somehow a fusion which gives rise to a new set of values or viewpoints. The two kinds of value—the scientific, on the one hand, and the philosophic, artistic, and religious, on the other—maintain their identity. In other words, they should be *distinguished* but not *separated* from each other. The student is operating with both, but he knows when he is operating with the one and when with the other. The all-too-common practice has been to separate them. The players, instead of playing as partners, have tried to play a lone hand. It is

worth illustrating this situation at some length.

Consider sociology. This may take the form of a purely factual study of processes actually occurring in society. In spirit and intention, it may be purely scientific. Many of its "professors" handle it in this way and insist that it is the only way. It becomes a matter of amassing factual data, statistical and other, about divorce, population movements, crime, and so on. It would seem that in this connection there is a special fallacy implied in the separation of the facts from their philosophic interpretation. It is not so much that the fields selected for factual, scientific exploration are determined by more or less surreptitious judgments of value, nonscientific value. Crime, for instance, is selected because of its general social significance. The scientific sociologist could well retort that scientific research is always in large measure determined by such considerations. The fallacy is of another and more subtle sort. In the natural sciences there is not merely a steady accumulation of facts; there is a steady *systematization* of them; and this in itself gives meaning and dynamic to the process of fact-accumulation.

In a study like sociology, on the other hand, this particular source of significance and stimulus is largely lacking. Here the accumulation of facts and the interpretation of them cannot be separated without incurring the risk of turning the former into a rather pointless process of mere fact-gathering. In sociology, to adapt a phrase of Kant's, fact-accumulation without social philosophy is blind, and social philosophy without a basis of facts is empty. The same thing is true of a study like political economy.

* * *

To return to the practical problem of organizing a curriculum for purposes of general education: the foregoing analysis indicates the subjects or fields of study of which such a curriculum should consist. The core of it would be: science, natural and social; art (with literature regarded as essential, for reasons already indicated); philosophy, social-political and general or metaphysical; history, contributing in its threefold way as

science, philosophy, and literature; and logic, as a study of scientific method and, more generally, an appreciation of the difference between straight and crooked thinking (which would mean, incidentally, a broader view of this subject than is implied in its traditional affiliation with philosophy).

Our analysis, however, makes it also clear that we cannot assume that a sound general education will inevitably result from a program so devised. It depends, in the last resort, on those who happen to be teaching the various subjects. The danger of narrowness is always present, although no subject is in itself narrow. It is sometimes claimed that the teacher's efforts at a liberal approach are defeated by an ingrained narrowness of outlook on the part of his students: There is probably truth in this, not because young people are by nature unresponsive to the broader appeal—the contrary is the case—but because their idea of education is likely to be vaguely identified with that of vocational preparation and money-making. At the same time, narrowness of outlook and treatment on the part of the teachers is always something to be feared.

...

By way of illustration, let us consider history, a subject which seems to possess special significance for general education, inasmuch as it represents an attempt to integrate three different viewpoints—the scientific, the philosophic, and the literary. History teachers at the academic level are rather prone to an overemphasis of the scientific aspect, with the result that, if the student does not again encounter history in the context of social and political philosophy, he will be left with a cultural blind spot. It would be easy to illustrate the point from history generally, but it is equally clear if we take a particular aspect of historical study. Take the history of science itself.

This history will, of course, give the facts concerning the growth of science. So far, it is strictly scientific. It must link the facts into a narrative; otherwise they are not history—they are mere tabulation. So far, it is art. If it does no more than this, it is falling far short of exploiting its educational possibilities. It

should teach the student to apprehend the spirit and outlook of particular epochs. It should confront him with ethical issues, such as freedom of thought and inquiry, intellectual integrity, self-sacrifice, perseverance in face of disappointment and defeat—issues which are all the more impressive for being met in the vitalizing context of history. It will still fall short if it fails to draw upon the resources of creative art to make the great figures in the story of science come to life.

Likewise with studies such as social science and social philosophy: an effective integration must somehow be achieved. The way to achieve it will depend on the teaching resources available.

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The conclusion must therefore be that there is no way of eliminating the element of hit-or-miss from general education. Such education is bound up with a certain type of pro-

gram, on the one hand, and with a certain kind of teaching, on the other. The administrator can see to the first, but there is no device of organization that will make sure of the second. Success here turns largely on the possession by the teacher of an adequate philosophy of education and of the skill and enthusiasm to implement it. We have already seen that, at the more primary levels of education, a philosophy of education may make a great difference to the teacher's outlook on basic issues such as mental and moral discipline. At the academic level, where the teacher is a specialist, a philosophy of education will help him to break out of the cozy cocoon of his special subject and look at the wider issues which should never be far from the mind of one who is using his subject in the cause of general education. While this will not eliminate the element of hit-or-miss, it will go far to insure that the hits are more frequent than the misses.

88 • Development of the Intellectual Virtues

Another conception of the role of the school in an age of change emphasizes the constant and universal habits of correct thought which are believed to constitute an education in all times and places. After the fashion of Aristotle, this approach to the problem conceives of man as a rational creature whose mind can and should be disciplined to the habits of correct thinking.

This view has been clearly stated by Robert Maynard Hutchins, one of its foremost exponents, from whose book on higher learning the following selection has been taken. Hutchins recognizes the vast social changes occurring in the world. He is aware of the high degree of specialization in contemporary society—in occupations, professions, research, and education. He perceives clearly the tendency of the modern scholar to fence off a small piece of research ground and to till his own little garden without regard to what is going on in the other gardens or in the world about him. Such specialization of life and knowledge Hutchins sees as a mixed blessing. It is necessary for material progress, but it impoverishes the intellectual life.

[From Robert M. Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America*, Yale University Press, 1936, pp. 59-64, 65-70. Used by permission. Some footnotes omitted.]

The antidote for the evils of both specialization and accelerated social change is to be found in the cultivation of the intellectual virtues. These habits of disciplined thinking are the common denominator of all specialized endeavors. They serve the man of science as well as the philosopher or the man of practical action. Moreover, they are good in themselves. Their development is the fulfillment of man's nature as a rational being. Hence, at any time and place, a proper education will make their development its chief concern.

We can never get a university without general education. Unless students and professors (and particularly professors) have a common intellectual training, a university must remain a series of disparate schools and departments, united by nothing except the fact that they have the same president and board of trustees. Professors cannot talk to one another, not at least about anything important. They cannot hope to understand one another.

We may take it for granted that we shall always have specialists; yet neither the world nor knowledge of it is arbitrarily divided up as universities are. Everybody cannot be a specialist in every field. He must therefore be cut off from every field but his own unless he has the same basic education that other specialists have. This means more than having the same language and the same general interest in advancing knowledge. It means having a common stock of fundamental ideas. This becomes more important as empirical science advances and accumulates more and more data. The specialist in a narrow field has all he can do to keep up with the latest discoveries in it. Other men, even in his own department, struggling to stay abreast of what is happening in their own segments of the subject, cannot hope to keep up with what is happening in his. They may now expect to have some general understanding of what he is doing because they all have something in common; they are in the same department. But the day will shortly be upon us when even this degree of comprehension will be impossible, because of the infinite splitting of subject matters and the progressive submer-

gence of any ideas by our insistence on information as the content of education.

Efforts to correct this tendency by administrative devices are mere palliatives. Roving professorships at Harvard, the divisional organization at Chicago, the Institute of Human Relations at Yale, noble and praiseworthy as they are, serve to mitigate and not to remove the disunity, discord, and disorder that have overtaken our educational system. If professors and students had a common stock of fundamental ideas, it might be possible for those in physiology to communicate with those in physics, and even law and divinity might begin to find it worthwhile to associate with one another.

. . . I should like to talk about content, not about method. I concede the great difficulty of communicating the kind of education I favor to those who are unable or unwilling to get their education from books. I insist, however, that the education I shall outline is the kind that everybody should have, that the answer to it is not that some people should not have it, but that we should find out how to give it to those whom we do not know how to teach at present. You cannot say my content is wrong because you do not know the method of transmitting it. Let us agree upon content if we can and have faith that the technological genius of America will solve the problem of communication.

Economic conditions require us to provide some kind of education for the young, and for all the young, up to about their twentieth year. Probably one-third of them cannot learn from books. This is no reason why we should not try to work out a better course of study

for the other two-thirds. At the same time we should continue our efforts and experiments to find out how to give a general education to the hand-minded and the functionally illiterate. Even these attempts may be somewhat simplified if we know what a general education is.

Please do not tell me that the general education I propose should not be adopted because the great majority of those who pass through it will not go on to the university. The scheme that I advance is based on the notion that general education is education for everybody, whether he goes on to the university or not. It will be useful to him in the university; it will be equally useful if he never goes there. I will admit that it will not be useful to him outside the university in the popular sense of utility. It may not assist him to make money or to get ahead. It may not in any obvious fashion adjust him to his environment or fit him for the contemporary scene. It will, however, have a deeper, wider utility: it will cultivate the intellectual virtues.

The trouble with the popular notion of utility is that it confuses immediate and final ends. Material prosperity and adjustment to the environment are good more or less, but they are not good in themselves and there are other goods beyond them. The intellectual virtues, however, are good in themselves and good as means to happiness. By the intellectual virtues I mean good intellectual habits. The ancients distinguish five intellectual virtues: the three speculative virtues of intuitive knowledge, which is the habit of induction; of scientific knowledge, which is the habit of demonstration; and of philosophical wisdom, which is scientific knowledge, combined with intuitive reason, of things highest by nature, first principles and first causes. To these they add the two virtues of the practical intellect: art, the capacity to make according to a true course of reasoning, and prudence, which is right reason with respect to action.

In short, the intellectual virtues are habits resulting from the training of the intellectual powers. An intellect properly disciplined, an intellect properly habituated, is an intellect able to operate well in all fields. An education

that consists of the cultivation of the intellectual virtues, therefore, is the most useful education, whether the student is destined for a life of contemplation or a life of action. I would remind you of the words of Newman:

If then the intellect is so excellent a portion of us, and its cultivation so excellent, it is not only beautiful, perfect, admirable, and noble in itself, but in a true and high sense it must be useful to the possessor and to all around him; not useful in any low, mechanical, mercantile sense, but as diffusing good, or as a blessing, or a gift, or power, or a treasure, first to the owner, then through him to the world.¹

I shall not be attentive when you tell me that the plan of general education I am about to present is remote from real life, that real life is in constant flux and change, and that education must be in constant flux and change as well. I do not deny that all things are in change. They have a beginning, and a middle, and an end. Nor will I deny that the history of the race reveals tremendous technological advances and great increases in our scientific knowledge. But we are so impressed with scientific and technological progress that we assume similar progress in every field. We renounce our intellectual heritage, read only the most recent books, discuss only current events, try to keep the schools abreast or even ahead of the times, and write elaborate addresses on Education and Social Change.

* * *

Our erroneous notion of progress has thrown the classics and the liberal arts out of the curriculum, overemphasized the empirical sciences, and made education the servant of any contemporary movements in society, no matter how superficial. In recent years this attitude has been accentuated by the worldwide depression and the highly advertised political, social, and economic changes resulting from it. We have been very much upset

¹ Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, VIII, 3: "To be always seeking after the useful does not become free and exalted souls."

by all these things. We have felt that it was our duty to educate the young so that they would be prepared for further political, social, and economic changes. Some of us have thought we should try to figure out what the impending changes would be and frame a curriculum that embodied them. Others have even thought that we should decide what changes are desirable and then educate our students not merely to anticipate them, but also to take part in bringing them about.

One purpose of education is to draw out the elements of our common human nature. These elements are the same in any time or place. The notion of educating a man to live in any particular time or place, to adjust him to any particular environment, is therefore foreign to a true conception of education.

Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same.² Hence education should be everywhere the same. I do not overlook the possibilities of differences in organization, in administration, in local habits and customs. These are details. I suggest that the heart of any course of study designed for the whole people will be, if education is rightly understood, the same at any time, in any place, under any political, social, or economic conditions. Even the administrative details are likely to be similar because all societies have generic similarity.

If education is rightly understood, it will be understood as the cultivation of the intellect. The cultivation of the intellect is the same good for all men in all societies. It is, moreover, the good for which all other goods are only means. Material prosperity, peace and civil order, justice and the moral virtues are means to the cultivation of the intellect. So Aristotle says in the *Politics*: "Now, in men reason and mind are the end towards which nature strives, so that the generation and moral discipline of the citizens ought to be ordered with a view to them." An education

² "It is therefore evident that, as regards the general principles whether of speculative or practical reason, truth or rectitude is the same for all, and is equally known by all." *Summa Theologica*, Part II, Q. 94, Art. 4.

which served the means rather than their end would be misguided.

I agree, of course, that any plan of general education must be such as to educate the student for intelligent action. It must, therefore, start him on the road toward practical wisdom. But the question is what is the best way for education to start him and how far can it carry him. Prudence or practical wisdom selects the means toward the ends that we desire. It is acquired partly from intellectual operations and partly from experience. But the chief requirement for it is correctness in thinking. Since education cannot duplicate the experiences which the student will have when he graduates, it should devote itself to developing correctness in thinking as a means to practical wisdom, that is, to intelligent action.

As Aristotle put it in the *Ethics*, ". . . while young men became geometers and mathematicians and wise in matters like these, it is thought that a young man of practical wisdom cannot be found. The cause is that such wisdom is concerned not only with universals, but with particulars, but a young man has no experience, for it is length of time that gives experience." Since practical wisdom is "a true and reasoned capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man," it would seem that education can make its best contribution to the development of practical wisdom by concentrating on the reasoning essential to it.

A modern heresy is that all education is formal education and that formal education must assume the total responsibility for the full development of the individual. The Greek notion that the city educates the man has been forgotten. Everything that educated the man in the city has to be imported into our schools, colleges, and universities. We are beginning to behave as though the home, the church, the state, the newspaper, the radio, the movies, the neighborhood club, and the boy next door did not exist. All the experience that is daily and hourly acquired from these sources is overlooked, and we set out to supply imitations of it in educational institutions. The experience once provided by some

of these agencies may be attenuated now; but it would be a bold man who would assert that the young person today lived a life less full of experience than the youth of yesterday. Today as yesterday we may leave experience to other institutions and influences and emphasize in education the contribution that it is supremely fitted to make, the intellectual training of the young. The life they lead when they are out of our hands will give them experience enough. We cannot try to give it to them and at the same time perform the task that is ours and ours alone.

Young people do not spend all their time in school. Their elders commonly spend none of it there. Yet their elders are, we hope, constantly growing in practical wisdom. They are, at least, having experience. If we can teach them while they are being educated how to reason, they may be able to comprehend and assimilate their experience. It is a good principle of educational administration that a college or university should do nothing that another agency can do as well. This is a good principle because a college or university has a vast and complicated job if it does what only it can do. In general education, therefore, we may wisely leave experience to life and set about our job of intellectual training.

If there are permanent studies which every person who wishes to call himself educated should master; if those studies constitute our intellectual inheritance, then those studies should be the center of a general education. They cannot be ignored because they are difficult, or unpleasant, or because they are almost totally missing from our curriculum today.

* * *

If we are educators we must have a subject matter, and a rational, defensible one. If that subject matter is education, we cannot alter it to suit the whims of parents, students, or the public. Whewell, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, one hundred years ago, said:

Young persons may be so employed and so treated, that their caprice, their self-will, their individual tastes and propensities, are

educated and developed; but this is not Education. It is not the Education of a Man; for what is educated is not what belongs to man as man, and connects man with man. It is not the Education of a man's Humanity, but the Indulgence of his Individuality.

In general education we are interested in drawing out the elements of our common human nature; we are interested in the attributes of the race, not the accidents of individuals.

* * *

By insisting on the permanent studies as the heart of a general education I do not mean to insist that they are the whole of it. We do not know enough to know whether certain technological work, for example, may not have a certain subsidiary value in general education for some students. Nor do I overlook the fact that since by hypothesis general education may be terminal for most students, it must connect them with the present and future as well as with the past. It is as important for them to know that thinking is still going on as it is for them to know what has been thought before.

* * *

We have excluded body building and character building. We have excluded the social graces and the tricks of trades. We have suggested that the curriculum should be composed principally of the permanent studies. We propose the permanent studies because these studies draw out the elements of our common human nature, because they connect man with man, because they connect us with the best that man has thought, because they are basic to any further study and to any understanding of the world. What are the permanent studies?

They are in the first place those books which have through the centuries attained to the dimensions of classics. Many such books, I am afraid, are in the ancient and medieval period. But even these are contemporary. A classic is a book that is contemporary in every age. That is why it is a classic.

Such books are then a part, and a large part, of the permanent studies. They are so in the first place because they are the best books we know. How can we call a man educated who has never read any of the great books in the western world?

* * *

In the second place these books are an essential part of general education because it is impossible to understand any subject or to comprehend the contemporary world without them. If we read Newton's *Principia*, we see a great genius in action; we make the acquaintance of a work of unexampled simplicity and elegance. We understand, too, the basis of modern science. The false starts, the backing and filling, the wildness, the hysteria, the confusion of modern thought and the modern world result from the loss of what has been thought and done by earlier ages. The Industrial Revolution begins our study of history and the social sciences. Philosophy begins with Descartes and Locke and psychology with Wundt and William James. Natural science originates with the great experimenters of the nineteenth century. If anything prior is mentioned, it is only as a reminder that our recent great achievements in these fields must, of course, have had some primitive beginnings in the dark earlier centuries.

* * *

Yet we may with profit remember the words of Nicholas Murray Butler:

Only the scholar can realize how little that is being said and thought in the modern world is in any sense new. It was the colossal triumph of the Greeks and Romans and the great thinkers of the Middle Ages to sound the depths of almost every problem which human nature has to offer, and to interpret human thought and human aspiration with astounding profundity and insight. Unhappily, these deep-lying facts which should be controlling in the life of a civilized people with a historical background, are known only to a few, while the many grasp, now at an ancient and well-

demonstrated falsehood and now at an old and well-proved truth, as if each had all the attractions of novelty.

You will note that Mr. Butler says that only a scholar can realize these things. Why should this insight be confined to scholars? Every educated person should know the colossal triumph of the Greeks and Romans and the great thinkers of the Middle Ages. If every man were educated—and why should he not be?—our people would not fall so easily a prey to the latest nostrums in economics, in politics, and, I may add, in education.

* * *

In order to read books one must know how to do it. The degeneracy of instruction in English grammar should not blind us to the fact that only through grammatical study can written works be understood. Grammar is the scientific analysis of language through which we understand the meaning and force of what is written. Grammar disciplines the mind and develops the logical faculty. It is good in itself and as an aid to reading the classics. It has a place in general education in connection with the classics and independently of them. For those who are going to learn from books learning the art of reading would seem to be indispensable.

* * *

I add to grammar, or the rules of reading, rhetoric and logic, or the rules of writing, speaking, and reasoning. The classics provide models of excellence; grammar, rhetoric, and logic are means of determining how excellence is achieved. We have forgotten that there are rules for speaking. And English composition, as it is commonly taught, is a feeble and debased imitation of the classical rules of writing, placing emphasis either on the most trivial details or on what is called self-expression. Self-expression as here understood is, of course, the exact reverse of the discipline which rhetoric in all ages up to the present was used to give. Logic is a statement in technical form of the conditions under

which reasoning is rigorously demonstrative. If the object of general education is to train the mind for intelligent action, logic cannot be missing from it.

Logic is a critical branch of the study of reasoning. It remains only to add a study which exemplifies reasoning in its clearest and most precise form. That study is, of course, mathematics, and of the mathematical studies chiefly those that use the type of exposition that Euclid employed. In such studies the pure operation of reason is made manifest. The subject matter depends on the universal and necessary processes of human thought. It is not affected by differences in taste, disposition, or prejudice. It refutes the common answer of students who, conformable to the temper of the times, wish to accept the principles and deny the conclusions. Correctness in thinking may be more directly and impressively taught through mathematics than in any other way.

* * *

We have then for general education a course of study consisting of the greatest books of the western world and the arts of reading, writing, thinking, and speaking, together with mathematics, the best exemplar of the processes of human reason. If our hope has been to frame a curriculum which educes the elements of our common human nature, this program should realize our hope. If we wish to prepare the young for intelligent action, this course of study should assist us; for they will have learned what has been done in the past, and what the greatest men have thought. They will have learned how to think themselves. If we wish to lay a basis for advanced study, that basis is provided. If we wish to secure true universities, we may look forward to them, because students and professors may acquire through this course of study a common stock of ideas and common methods of dealing with them. All the needs of general education in America seem to be satisfied by this curriculum.

89 • Education and the New Humanism

In a century marked by totalitarian dogmas and by sacrifice of the individual to the state or to an absolute social ideal, it is not surprising to find a renewed emphasis upon the maintenance of the integrity of the individual as the task of education. This is an old view of the function of education, originating in the Renaissance. Since it stresses the expansion of the individual's inner life, his enjoyment of truth and beauty, this conception is especially relevant to the problem of leisure resulting from the impact of science and technology upon the production and distribution of goods. But the author of the following account of the humanistic view of education, Jacques Maritain, a distinguished Catholic philosopher and scholar, recognizes that humanism in education must deal not only with the enrichment of the inner life but also with such personal development as will lead to moral conduct and to the acceptance of social and political responsibility. This additional burden which education must assume arises, Maritain asserts, in part from the breakdown of the doctrine of individualism and from the complete separation

[From Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads*, Yale University Press, 1943, pp. 88-95, 97-100. Used by permission. Some footnotes omitted.]

of religious beliefs from secular activities, and of work from the spiritual and esthetic life. In short, the school must help mankind to find a new integration of life, a new orientation within which his activities will again be permeated with religious significance, personal enrichment, and social responsibility.

If mankind overcomes the terrible threats of slavery and dehumanization which it faces today, it will thirst for a new humanism, and be eager to rediscover the integrity of man, and to avoid the cleavages from which the preceding age suffered so much. To correspond to this integral humanism, there should be an integral education. . . .

Bourgeois individualism is done for. What will assume full importance for the man of tomorrow are the vital connections of man with society, that is, not only the social environment but also common work and common good. The problem is to replace the individualism of the bourgeois era not by totalitarianism or the sheer collectivism of the beehive but by a personalistic and communal civilization, grounded on human rights and satisfying the social aspirations and needs of man. Education must remove the rift between the social claim and the individual claim within man himself. It must therefore develop both the sense of freedom and the sense of responsibility, human rights and human obligations, the courage to take risks and exert authority for the general welfare and the respect for the humanity of each individual person.

The education of tomorrow must also bring to an end the cleavage between religious inspiration and secular activity in man, if it is true that an integral humanism would have as one of its main features an effort of sanctification of profane and secular existence. And the education of tomorrow must bring to an end, too, the cleavage between work or useful activity and the blossoming of spiritual life and disinterested joy in knowledge and beauty. Here we perceive the genuinely democratic character of the educa-

tion of tomorrow. Everyone must work, or share in the burden of the social community, according to his own ability. But work is not an end in itself; work should afford leisure for the joy, expansion, and delight of the spirit.

HUMAN LEISURE AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

The problem of human leisure, which mechanical and social progress had already made important before the war, is bound to become a particularly crucial problem in the world of tomorrow. Physical and mental relaxation, plays, movies, games, are good and necessary. Only that leisure however is suitable to what is most human in man, and is of greater worth than work itself, which consists of an expansion of our inner activities in enjoying the fruits of knowledge and beauty. Liberal education enables man to do so. Here we see one of the reasons why liberal education should be extended to all. Be it noted, by the way, that children who are apathetic or reluctant as regards liberal education, without eagerness to learn or mental inquisitiveness, are not to be found among the poorer classes more than among the wealthy ones (the opposite is more often the case). Those who are acquainted with working youth and labor know that nowhere is a greater thirst for knowledge to be found, if only sufficient facilities are given them. This thirst for knowledge, for liberal knowledge, is one with the thirst for social liberation and coming of age. The education of tomorrow must provide the common man with the means for his personal fulfillment, not only with regard to his labor but also with regard to his social and political

activities in the civil commonwealth, and to the activities of his leisure hours. . . .

THE NORMAL TASK OF EDUCATION AND ITS SUPERADDED BURDENS

We come now to the special tasks which the present crisis of civilization and the conditions of the postwar world are to impose upon education. These tasks are manifold and momentous. As a result of the present disintegration of family life, of a crisis in morality and the break between religion and life, and finally of a crisis in the political state and the civic conscience, and the necessity for democratic states to rebuild themselves according to new patterns, there is a tendency, everywhere, to burden education with remedying all these deficiencies. This involves a risk of warping educational work, especially when immediate transformations are expected from its supposedly magic power. Yet extraneous burdens superadded to the normal task of education must be accepted for the sake of the general welfare.

In such a situation, the duty of educators is obviously twofold: they have both to maintain the essentials of humanistic education and to adapt them to the present requirements of the common good.

Education has its own essence and its own aims. This essence and these essential aims, which deal with the formation of man and the inner liberation of the human person, must be preserved, whatever the superimposed burdens may be. It is not a question of refusing the latter. But if they were taken up in the wrong way, so as to warp the essential human values of education; or if the school, conceived according to some totalitarian pattern as an organ of the political state, were to replace the free and normal agencies provided by nature and by God for the upbringing of man, then the common good, for the sake of which the superadded burdens must be assumed, would not be ensured, but betrayed. The remedy would only have aggravated the evil.

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THE STATE

It is to be expected that in the world of tomorrow the educational system will take on ever-growing importance and amplitude, and become, still more than today, the basic and crucial function of a civil community aware of the dignity of the people, and of the destined rise of the common man. Since we have here a matter of public interest, the state cannot hold itself aloof from it, and its help as well as its supervision will be accordingly required. Many changes in the present status of colleges and universities will probably take place. The number of educational institutions founded and supported by the state will probably increase. All this is a normal process in itself. But it must be brought about in freedom and for freedom, and the relationship between state and school must be rightly understood.

Here we face again the importance of the pluralist principle, which grants to the manifold groups arising from free association the greatest possible autonomy, and bases the state's superior authority on the recognition of the rights of these groups. As concerns the educational system, the pluralist principle implies basically academic freedom. Not only does it stress the right to found schools, which is open to everyone qualified and complying with the laws of the state. It also demands that diverse teaching institutions be free to join with each other in several unions or organizations which would be prevented by law from encroaching upon the basic liberties of their members, but could establish general regulations valid inside each union. It is by the agreements concluded between the state and some general board composed of the representatives of these unions (including the unions of schools and colleges supported by the state) that any justifiable intervention of the state in educational matters might take place.

An important role should be granted to the parents' associations, which would make their desires heard by the educational body and

whose claims could counterbalance the demands of the state. The role of labor unions and other great economic or cultural organizations, which might possibly become the founders and trustees of a number of privately endowed teaching institutions, should also be taken into consideration.

MORAL TEACHING

If we consider more closely the added tasks which I have mentioned, the first has to do with the present crisis in morality. The task of moral re-education is really a matter of public emergency. Every serious observer recognizes the fact that children have not only to be trained in proper conduct, law observance, and politeness, but that this very training remains deficient and precarious if there is no genuine internal formation. That the teachers in public schools may not face unruliness and violence, moral authority must be recognized; and there must be a serious teaching of moral principles, I mean as grounded on truth rather than as suitable to social convenience. This surely involves more than the theory that children should first set free the instincts of primitive man in order to purge themselves of them.

Professor F. Clarke, Director of the Institute of Education at the University of London, recently advocated severity and authority in schools and colleges, and "the continual maintenance in education," as he puts it, "of stringency and tension, something analogous to the conditions of 'fitness' in the physical field."¹

He even went so far as to say that "original sin may be more than an outworn theological dogma after all," and that "of all the needs of democracy, some abiding sense of the reality of original sin may yet prove to be the greatest." As a Catholic, I readily agree with him, while adding that an abiding sense of the reality of the internal power of regenerating grace and faith, hope, and charity, may prove to be even more necessary.

¹ F. Clarke, *A Review of Educational Thought* (London, 1942).

Yet what our present problem asks us to take into consideration is the large number of parents who are opposed to any religious education for their children. Here we are confronted anew with a peculiar task required today from the school system, and which is momentous. Additional emphasis should be brought to the teaching of natural morality. The normal way of giving this teaching, which is to have it embodied in the humanities, literature, and history . . . does not suffice in the face of the tremendous degradation of ethical reason which is observable today. For the moment the evil seems more apparent in our ideas than in our conduct, I mean in still civilized countries. Exhausted and bewildered by dint of false and dehumanized philosophy, reason confesses its impotence to justify any ethical standards. To such a disease of human intelligence and conscience, special remedies should be given, not only through the badly needed revival of religious faith but also through a revival of the moral power of reason. Accordingly, if teachers may be found whose reason is healthier than that of their students, special teaching should be provided, in schools and colleges, for the principles of natural morality.

Let us observe at this point that the field in which natural morality feels most at home, and least deficient, is the field of our temporal activities, or of political, civic, and social morality: because the virtues proper to this field are essentially natural ones, directed toward the good of civilization; whereas in the field of personal morality, the whole scope of the moral life cannot be comprehended by reason with regard to our real system of conduct in actual existence, without taking into account the supra-temporal destiny of man. So the teaching of natural morality will naturally tend to lay stress on what may be called the ethics of political life and of civilization. Which is all to the good (for here it enjoys its maximum strength and practical truth) provided that it resist the temptation of neglecting or disparaging personal morality, which is the root of all morality. Above all it should resist the temptation of warping and

perverting all its work by making itself a tool of the state to shape youth according to the collective pattern supposedly needed by the pride, greed, or myths of the earthly community.

* * *

THE NEEDS OF THE POLITICAL COMMONWEALTH AND EDUCATION

The second burden superadded to the normal task of education deals with the needs of the state and the political commonwealth in the postwar period. In this connection Professor Clarke, whom I have already quoted, warns us that "it is not for this generation to know the settled peace and quiet effectiveness of an assured and straightmoving education." He observes that the sense of amplitude and freedom enjoyed in so high a degree by his country's traditional education implied in reality the common acceptance, by the entire social environment, of strong and imperative mental and political patterns, of customs, habits, and standards deeply, subconsciously rooted. Thus the freest educational system involves in reality an authoritative character, "least obvious," he goes on to say, "just when it is most complete and unquestioned; when it is so secure, so absolute, so all-pervading that it feels no need to be obtrusive."

It is clear that for the educational body as well as for the individual citizen, freedom, rights, and autonomy have responsibility, duties, and moral obligations as their correlatives. In a human commonwealth, freedom and authority are as necessary for one another, by virtue of the nature of things, as their occasional conflicts are inevitable in actual fact. Political authority, that right to direct and to be obeyed for the sake of the general welfare, political authority is not opposed to human freedom, but required by it. In contradistinction to despotic authority, which directs a man toward the private and individual good of his master, and which places the one directed in a state of servitude, political authority directs free men toward the good, not of the one who directs, but of the

multitude as a whole, or of the body politic—a common good which is desired by each component of the body politic, insofar as he is a part of it, and which is to flow back upon each one. Political authority, which is naught without justice, requires by its very nature free obedience based on conscience and moral obligation. The power of compulsion is only an additional property, arising from the fact that this command of justice may be, and is often in fact, disregarded by some. But without genuine authority, that is, without the very right to be obeyed by virtue of man's moral conscience, this power of compulsion is but tyrannical.

These basic principles apply to groups and particular bodies as well as to the individuals in civil society. The educational body, to the very extent that it is free and autonomous, is bound in conscience to the common good. To the very extent that it is entrusted with an all-important function in the common good, it is bound in conscience to feel responsible toward the entire community, and to take into consideration the requirements of the general welfare. Political authority, in the broad sense in which I use the word, has not only to protect the freedom of teaching but also to guide it toward the good of the whole, as far as a matter essential to the very life of the whole is involved.

Indeed, the time of anarchical freedom, which is but a false freedom, is gone. The crucial point is to pass on to an age, not of servitude, but of real and organic freedom. As concerns education, this is not the moment to accept any philosophy which would warp its true essence, but rather to affirm and maintain this essence more than ever. I am afraid the new insistence on authority, therefore, if it departs from the unchangeable lines of the education of man, may perhaps deviate toward rather despotic educational philosophies.

Professor Clarke's definition of education, as the "self-perpetuation of an accepted culture, . . . of a culture which is the life of a determinate society," is only given in terms of social qualities, and is not adequate. If an accepted culture is permeated with errors,

cruelities, or slavery, the task of education is not to perpetuate it, but to strive to change it. No doubt Professor Clarke would not deny that; and when he approves of the statement by Professor Hocking, "Education must produce the type," he approves too of the second part of the same statement, "and it must provide for growth beyond the type."

Yet this very formula, even with its additional correction, remains terribly biological

and sociological. Doubtless because education is immersed in a given culture and conveys it to youth, it produces in actual fact an average cultural type—but without having chosen such a task as its aim. Its real aim is to make a man. If the type is wrong, to grow beyond the type will perhaps result in something still worse. Education should essentially aim not at producing the type but at liberating the human person.

90 • Education as Social Reconstruction

Another of the pervasive conceptions of the function of education is that of promoting social improvement and progress. Again and again, the American people have turned to the schools for help in carrying out long-range programs of social development. It is often assumed that through proper instruction we can cut down the number of traffic accidents, reduce the incidence of disease and intemperance, expand the consumption of goods and services, improve family life, provide for a better utilization of leisure time, and so on through a long list of specific reforms. But, up to the present time, this theory of the social function of education has been conceived by the public at large in purely opportunistic and piecemeal terms.

The concluding selection in this chapter asserts that social improvement and progress is a central concern of the school. But the position taken in this selection, by B. Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores, differs from the *ad hoc* view outlined above in at least two respects. First, it develops a rationale for a deliberate, systematic program of study designed to develop in students the intelligence and skills required for a thorough reconsideration of our social beliefs and institutions in the light of the American democratic ideal and the new conditions of life created by modern science and technology. Secondly this rationale does not assume that teachers already know the answers or that the school should be used to implement a preconceived program of intellectual and institutional reconstruction.

The authors of this selection believe that American society, like the rest of the civilized world, is now passing through a period of rapid and profound social change engendered by the remarkable development of science and technology in the last century. New life conditions always require systematic modification of traditional beliefs and institutions. But reconstruction implies the principle of continuity. It is a process of modification—not revolution—which necessarily assumes that the central core of American beliefs and institutions is valid.

Further, the rationale delineated in this passage does not suggest that the school can—in any direct sense—reconstruct social institutions. Obviously only society itself can do that. Indeed, even beliefs formed in the school are rarely permanent unless they are confirmed by opinions outside. The school can, and should, develop in its students a disciplined intelligence which is applicable to social problems. The authors hold, however, that this discipline can be developed only if the school makes the study of social problems a primary focus of its educational program.

The social office of education is to foster a continuous reexamination and reconstruction of our social ideals, beliefs and institutions. This school of thought accepts the contention that the American educator derives his moral authority from the ethical and methodological tenets of the American democratic tradition. It therefore holds (in substantial agreement with the democratic wing of the position that the primary social function of education is the perpetuation of the cultural heritage) that the first duty of the public school is to maintain and promote the democratic way of life. It differs from that view both in its interpretation of the democratic tradition and its interpretation of the present social situation.

With respect to the first divergence, the reconstructionist points out that the final criterion of the good embodied in the democratic tradition is not that of appeal to accepted values of the past, but of the welfare of men and women as verified and confirmed by their own experience. The democratic ethic, unlike purely traditional ethics, includes within itself provisions for its own reexamination and reconstruction. With respect to the second point, the reconstructionist finds that, in the altered world created by the scientific and technological revolutions, certain of the traditional conceptions of democracy no longer work as they had been expected to work. Consequently, sincere democrats have now become divided and confused with respect to the meaning of the democratic tradition for the modern world.

Under such circumstances, clarification and definition of the meaning of the democratic tradition for an interdependent industrial civilization are imperative if that tradition is to give birth to a new intellectual and moral consensus capable of molding and directing the social transformations now clearly under way throughout the modern world. On both these counts the reconstructionist holds that the educator's commitment to the democratic tradition means, not simply the inculcation of traditional points of view but the reexamination and reconstruction of the cultural heritage in the light of new problems and conditions.

Probably enough has already been said to indicate that the reconstruction theory represents the only definition of the social function of education which, in a period of profound social crisis and transition such as the present, offers any hope whatever that education may play a significant role in the uncoerced resolution of social conflicts and problems. And if it is true, as many have believed, that education is the only alternative to force, then it would appear that the American public must espouse the educational adventure implied by this position—or else abandon the attempt to reestablish consensus through reasoned discussion and consent rather than through civil strife and dictatorship.

In accepting the thesis that continuous reexamination and reconstruction of social ideals, beliefs, and institutions constitute the primary social purpose of education, three rather serious errors of interpretation, current

among adherents as well as opponents of this conception, must be avoided.

RECONSTRUCTION, NOT REPUDIATION, OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Reconstruction does not mean wholesale repudiation of the cultural heritage. For, if reconstruction implies change, it also, and even more fundamentally, implies continuity. In fact this position is conservative, in that it holds that the democratic tradition is at once so precious and so deeply ingrained in American character that it affords not only the sole basis upon which moral and intellectual consensus can now be reestablished by mutual consent and persuasion but also the sole basis upon which any really satisfactory social order can be built. This theory, however, is realistic enough to recognize that in periods of profound social change reconstruction is the price of survival; and it is radical enough to insist that necessary changes in beliefs and institutions must be vigorously carried through while there is yet time.

Nevertheless, the fundamental spirit of reconstruction is that of preservation, extension, and improvement. In a very real sense it is but the dynamic form of the view that the primary purpose of education in American society is the preservation of a democratic social and moral order. This emphasis is supremely important. For it is perfectly clear that the advocates of the position . . . (that the function of education is to preserve the existing social order) are fundamentally correct; societies establish educational systems to preserve, not to destroy, their basic moral and institutional order. Consequently, it is only in terms of the democratic and dynamic form of that position, particularly adapted to periods of rapid and fundamental social change, that the reconstructionist's theory can be defended.

DEEP CONVICTION NOT PRECLUDED

To clear up a second erroneous view, continuous reconstruction does not mean that

everything is to be changed at once or that all views are to be held so tentatively that they provide no basis for firm and vigorous action. The presumption is always with established beliefs and institutions; reexamination and reconstruction are properly demanded only at those points where serious problems and conflicts emerge. Moreover, critical thought and reasoned discussion are not incompatible with conviction. There is no more grave or erroneous perversion of the democratic creed than the idea that all beliefs must be held so tentatively as to preclude action. Democratic survival demands deep commitment and vigorous action no less than it demands reexamination and reconstruction. The preservation of democracy now requires the development of persons capable of yielding the same devoted loyalty to reasoned convictions and to the method of experimental thought and discussion that they formerly granted only to rigid and dogmatic creeds.

This loyalty to the method of intelligence and mutual persuasion, however, must not be so absolute as to preclude the capacity to fight, on occasion, for democratic ideals. Obviously, reason and persuasion, coupled with a marked strain towards genuine consensus, would always represent the first impulse and resort of a thoroughly democratic personality. But in an imperfect democracy—and human democracy will always remain in some respects imperfect—political and even economic conflict, in conjunction with free and open discussion, majority decision, and the right of the minority to examine and criticize in an effort to force reconsideration, are accepted and necessary techniques of democratic deliberation and action. Democratic citizenship frequently involves the willingness and the ability required to modify conflict in the direction of consensus, where consensus appears possible. But it also involves the ability to analyze and evaluate the issues implicit in social conflict; and, where genuine consensus appears impossible, it also engages the capacity to participate actively in social conflict on the side indicated by that analysis and evaluation.

Democratic citizenship may even involve

the willingness and the capacity to employ armed force where intransigent and undemocratic social groups persist in preventing by force the operation of democratic processes of discussion and decision. In short, devotion to democratic ideals and processes does imply a strong preference for reasoned discussion and mutual agreement; but it does not mean that democratic personalities cannot vigorously oppose, by the accepted democratic processes of public debate and political action, undemocratic proposals and policies. It certainly does not mean that democrats must passively accept the arbitrary refusal of entrenched ruling classes to permit the introduction of democratic processes or that they must sit idly by while undemocratic social groups undermine, by force and violence, the foundations of a democratic society.

RECONSTRUCTION NOT PURELY INTELLECTUAL

Turning to a third error in interpretation, reconstruction must not be conceived in purely intellectual terms. Actually the task involves much more. Ideals and ideas are meaningless unless they are employed as guides to action; consequently, there is but little point to intellectual and moral reconstruction unless it is accompanied by a corresponding institutional reconstruction. Behind the contemporary social crisis—and hence behind the threat to the democratic way of life—lies the fact that in certain respects our social institutions are not, under the altered conditions of modern life, functioning as they had been expected to function. To take a single example, in so far as political and economic institutions harbor the idea of unrestricted national sovereignty, they are clearly incompatible with human security in an interdependent world armed with the highly destructive weapons created by modern science and technology. The crisis can be expected to continue until institutional structure is again able to function satisfactorily.

In a very real sense the basic difficulty is to be found in the partial disintegration of social consensus under the impact of changing con-

ditions and institutional malfunctioning. But it is precisely at the point of institutional arrangements that intellectual and moral confusion and disunity come to a focus; and it is in the context of institutional reconstruction that social consensus must be rebuilt if it is to be anything more than a spurious verbal agreement, which will promptly disintegrate at the first contact with reality. Furthermore, any society requires and, at the same time, builds a particular type of personal structure. Intellectual, moral, and institutional reconstruction, therefore, inevitably involves the reconstruction of the character of persons.

If reconstruction is to proceed by mutual consent, these three aspects of reconstruction cannot be conducted separately. Attempts to remake personal character in isolation from institutional reconstruction have always failed because they have not taken into account the fact that institutional arrangements mold and shape human personality. On the other hand it is possible, under certain conditions, to alter social institutions prior to a wholesale reshaping of personality. Where this is done deliberately and on a large scale, it necessarily entails an iron dictatorship established and maintained by a relatively small and compact minority. In a less systematic and deliberate but nevertheless very real way institutions (particularly in a highly dynamic society) are often changed by the sheer pressure of events, prior to any thoroughgoing reconstruction of personal structure. Deliberate *and* democratic social reconstruction, however, is an interrelated affair, involving coordinate changes in intellectual beliefs, personality structures, and social arrangements.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTERRELATED NATURE OF RECONSTRUCTION

The fact that democratic reconstruction is an interrelated process is replete with educational implications. It means, in the first place, that education is not something that goes on only within the four walls of the classroom. Educators must take account of, and concern themselves with, the educative

effects of social conditions, institutional structures, and group atmospheres as these impinge upon the character and personality of their students. Conversely, they must relate the work of the school to the life of the society of which it is a part. On the one hand, they must aid their students to comprehend and analyze the major forces operating in their society and the major problems which confront it; on the other hand, they must assist them to master the techniques and acquire the attitudes appropriate to democratic participation in the life of society. Hence the educator and the public must abandon the notion that the curriculum of the public schools can be limited to the traditional purposes and content of the academic subjects. They must abandon, too, the idea that the school is properly a cloistered academic retreat, separated from, and above, the conflict and turmoil of life.

The fact that deliberate and democratic reconstruction always involves coordinate changes in beliefs, personality structures, and social arrangements also means that education is an affair of the whole person and not merely of the intellect. Democratic citizenship and democratic reconstruction require a high degree of intellectual understanding. They require also a certain kind of moral commitment and a certain type of personality structure. Intellectual analysis and comprehension can play a significant role in shaping and reshaping personality and character. Really democratic character, in fact, cannot be built at all apart from intelligent criticism and understanding, since there is a significant element of self-direction and control in every truly democratic person.

The data of the psychological and social sciences clearly indicate, however, that character and personality are, first of all, the products of group atmospheres and behaviors and of the ways in which the physical and psychological needs of the individual are met or thwarted. Charged with the development of democratic persons, the school must give extensive attention to the quality of its functioning as a social group and to the extent to which, as well as the methods by which, per-

sonal and group needs are satisfied. For identical reasons, it must concern itself with the factors of family, neighborhood, community, and institutional life. In short, nothing that is germane to the life of its students or to the society of which they are members is foreign to the work of the school.

Finally, the coordinate character of the changes involved in democratic reconstruction means that such reconstruction cannot be fostered by the public school in isolation from the rest of society. There can be no question of the school's inability to remake, purely on its own initiative and by its own unaided efforts, the prevailing pattern of beliefs, institutions, and personality structures of any society. No society will be indifferent—nor can any society afford to be indifferent—about the quality or the tendency of its educational system. No school system will be granted complete autonomy with respect to its major purposes or policies. Moreover, even if this were not the case, no school system either would or could remold a society single-handed. Teachers, for the most part, are members of the society in which they teach; and, like other men, they cannot escape its molding influence. Where, therefore, a society is united and certain about its major premises, teachers would share the common faith as a matter of course. In any case, the school, powerful as it is, is so small a part of the total educative influences of society that its teachings would be relatively impotent against the united impact of all the rest.

* * *

Fundamentally, the social reconstructionist's position is based upon John Dewey's famous definition of education as the "continuous reconstruction of experience."¹ To that definition has been added an emphasis, by no means foreign to Dewey's thought, on the social character of experience and of the reconstruction of experience.

In summary, the social-reconstruction position may be defined as that curriculum theory

¹ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916), pp. 89-92.

which unites in one coherent pattern of thought the following propositions:

1. The belief that the moral authority of the teacher in our society ultimately rests upon the American democratic tradition regarded as a growing and developing ideal rather than as a fixed and final dogma.

2. The conviction that the ends of education are essentially social ends, coupled with the further conviction that, to the extent that society is democratic throughout, opposition between the social purposes of education and the needs and interests of children will be reduced to a minimum.

3. The contention that the basic social purpose of education cannot be comprehended

simply as the perpetuation of the *status quo*. The purpose must include, as its central focus, that continuous reconstruction of ideas and institutions required to make society a more and more perfect embodiment of the democratic way of life under the conditions prescribed by historical imperatives.

4. The thesis that the *core* of the curriculum of the public schools should consist of a careful study of the significant social problems now confronting the people, ordered and arranged with due regard for the abilities, interest and needs of children, and managed in such a way as will best develop the capacity of the learner to think, judge and act intelligently.

SUMMARY

The school in a period of social transformation can stress the traditional ideas and institutions which should be preserved, and so play a conservative role. On the other hand, it can emphasize the new ideas and social practices which promise to promote human welfare, and so play a progressive role. Ideally, the school should play both a conservative and a progressive role in society, nourishing and developing worthwhile new ideas and practices and protecting and maintaining valid old ones. In the foregoing selections both of these roles were emphasized. The differences among the theories presented in this chapter are in part differences of opinion about what is worth preserving from the past and what is worth encouraging from the present and in part differences about the relative emphasis to be given to the new and the old. They also reflect different theories of learning and conceptions of the methodology of human thought.

The theories presented in the selections have been stated so succinctly and clearly that a general summary of them hardly seems necessary. It is suggested, however, that the student summarize the chapter for himself by listing both the old ideas and practices and the new ones as set forth in each theory and then trying to decide which theories stress the old and which the new.

We have thus far considered contrasting conceptions of how the instructional program can take account of the changes now taking place in society. Nothing has been said, however, about the administration of the educational program under changing conditions. It is important, however, to recognize that the operation and management of the school are affected by social conditions and changes no less than the instructional program. In the next two chapters these aspects of the educational enterprise will be considered.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. Compare and contrast differing views of the nature and function of education today, using as starting points the assumptions each embodies concerning: *a)* current social conditions; *b)* what the school can and should do about these conditions; *c)* the kind of person and kind of society desired; *d)* the nature of intellectual and personal discipline.

2. Test the belief that the teacher should know the various theories of the social role of the school by exploring the ways in which this knowledge could be used in the work of the teacher. If possible, find actual examples of such use. In preparing your answer you might consult the following materials: *a)* the proceedings and resolutions of educational associations; *b)* discussions of the purposes of education heard over the air and published in books, newspapers, and magazine articles; *c)* Films depicting instructional programs and procedures.

3. In the light of the sociological analysis presented in Chapters 2-11, which view of the social role of the school do you think is most adequate? Justify your choice.

1. Perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of the various views of the social role of the school is presented in Theodore Brameld's *Philosophies of Education in Cultural Perspective*. See also the National Society for the Study of Education, *Forty-first Yearbook*, Part I, "Philosophies of Education"; Donald Butler, *Four Philosophies*; and Joseph Justman, *Theories of Secondary Education in the United States*.

2. For readable and penetrating analyses, from somewhat different points of view, of the school in modern society and the values it should attempt to realize, see Harry S. Broudy, *Building a Philosophy of Education*, Chapters 4, 6, 7, 10-15, and John L. Childs, *Education and Morals*.

3. Excellent analyses of the crucial issues involved in this chapter may be found in John S. Brubacher, *A History of the Problems of Education*; R. Freeman Butts, *The College Charts Its Course*; and John S. Brubacher, *Modern Philosophies in Education*.

4. The view that the school should help the individual to adjust to life in all of its various aspects is elaborated in *Education for all American Youth*, prepared by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association.

5. The position represented by Robert Maynard Hutchins in *The Higher Learning in America* has been stated, with somewhat different emphases, in John T. Foudy, *The Educational Principles of American Humanism*, and Mark Van Doren, *Liberal Education*.

6. For a more extended treatment of Maritain's position, see his *Education at the Crossroads*. This position, based upon a Catholic view of man and of society, is further elaborated in his presentation of Thomist views on education in the National Society for the Study of Education, *Fifty-fourth Yearbook*, Part I, "Modern Philosophies of Education," pp. 57-90.

7. The social reconstructionist position is developed and appraised by I. B. Berkson in his *Education Faces the Future*, Part III, and in Theodore Brameld's *Patterns of Educational Philosophy*, Part III, and *Toward a Reconstructed Theory of Education* (in

press). Professor Brameld's interpretation of this position differs at some points from that presented by Berkson and in the excerpt in the present text. An analysis of contemporary society from a social reconstructionist point of view will be found in William O. Stanley, *Education and Social Integration*. B. Othanel Smith *et al.*, *Fundamentals of Curriculum Development* (Chap. 29), and Professor Brameld's forthcoming book contain a defense of this position against some of the major criticisms which have been made of it, as well as criticisms of other points of view, including some that have not been presented in the present chapter.

PART FOUR

*Social Aspects of School
Organization and
Pedagogical Method*

Chapter 13. The Social Control of the School

B. Othanel Smith • William O. Stanley • J. Harlan Shores • Alan F. Griffin • Elmo Roper—*Life* Magazine • Ernest Horn • Herman G. Richey • National Education Association • Hollis P. Allen • Charles J. Stanley • William O. Stanley • Leslie W. Kindred • W. Paul Allen

Chapter 14. Thinking and Method in the Study of Social Problems

B. Othanel Smith • R. Bruce Raup *et al.* • Morris R. Cohen • Ernest Nagel • Gunnar Myrdal • William O. Stanley • Max R. Goodson • Frances Hunter Ferrell • Fred T. Wilhelms • Francis W. Parker School • Max R. Goodson • B. Othanel Smith *et al.*

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Social Control of the School

The school occupies a dual position in the political life of the nation. First, it is an instrument of social control. The school is supposed to educate the individual, irrespective of his national and cultural origin, in such a way that his conduct will follow the basic social patterns of society—so that he will take a responsible part in civic life, become a worthy member of a family, conduct himself properly in his leisure hours, and so on. Of course, the school is not supposed to accomplish all these things alone. Its work is reinforced by the family, the church, and other institutions. Nevertheless, the school is chiefly responsible for educating the individual in the ways and traditions of society. In the fulfillment of this responsibility, the school is an agency of social control, even though its objectives may be couched in the language of individual growth and development.

Secondly, the school is itself socially controlled. The very people it has shaped in turn exercise control over the school. They control it in part through their elected boards of education and in part through a multitude of diverse social pressures.

PUBLIC CONCERN WITH THE SCHOOL

The public is concerned about the school precisely because, whether they are aware of it or not, it is an instrument of social control. If it were not for the fact that the school does influence the economic, political, and social life of the people, the public would have little interest in it. To educate is to modify the behavior of the individual, to change his ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. Since these changes necessarily impinge upon economic and political institutions, they affect the fortunes of the people in every walk of life. Education in this sense is necessarily political because it has political conse-

quences. This reason alone is enough to involve the school from time to time in all sorts of political issues even though teachers and administrators may do everything in their power to remain neutral with respect to political and social questions.

The development of an educational program in the modern school is of greater public concern today than ever before. As we have seen in earlier chapters, the industrial and technological revolution is reshaping the social system. In such a time of change, people are in a state of uncertainty and tension. Their old expectations, their hopes that were built up under old social conditions, are not fulfilled in the new circumstances. Hence the people often are frustrated and tend to look for scapegoats. Since the school is close to the heart of the social mechanism that thwarts them, and since it is poorly protected against criticism, it is to be expected that it will be the object of violent and frequent public attack.

Social and political influence upon the school has a long history. When our nation was founded, the picture of George III which had adorned the pages of our schoolbooks was replaced by the picture of George Washington as a manifestation of our new spirit of nationalism. In some arithmetic books our new decimal system of money, which had replaced the English system of pounds and shillings, was extolled as protecting, through its simplicity, the common man against the trickery of the well-to-do, which, it was alleged, the complicated English money had been designed to facilitate. In short, all sorts of pressures were brought to bear upon the school to emphasize the merits, the spirit, and the traditions of the new nation.

SOCIAL PRESSURES ON THE SCHOOL

With the passage of time, the social pressures upon the school have increased in both number and intensity. To describe the scope of these pressures over the years would take the discussion far afield, but their range and significance can be indicated by reference to some of the more powerful and persistent ones. Perhaps the oldest and most pervasive is religious pressure. The anti-evolution law of Tennessee and the famous Scopes trial of the 1920's, involving a young teacher who had been removed from his position for teaching the theory of evolution, were the results of religious pressure. All the efforts to have religion taught in the school, as we saw in Chapter 9, arise from the same source. The utilities corporations in the 1920's succeeded in influencing many schools to emphasize the advantages of private ownership of the utilities.¹

In more recent years all sorts of economic interests have sought to get their views promulgated through the classrooms. It has been estimated that the cost of all the free instructional materials now available to the schools from various economic interests is greater than the combined cost of all the textbooks now being used. Veterans' organizations and other patriotic groups have encouraged state legislatures to pass bills requiring flag drills and patriotic exercises. In some states they have tried to force through legisla-

¹ R. Bruce Raup, *Education and Organized Interests* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1936), pp. 9-19, 29-39.

tion to censor textbooks and other instructional materials. The humane societies have been instrumental in some states in forcing the schools to devote time to instruction in the prevention of cruelty to animals. Labor organizations have attacked the schools for alleged bias against labor. Farm organizations have likewise criticized the school when it failed to satisfy their expectations.

It is not too much to say that few, if any, important organizations have failed to criticize or otherwise bring pressure to bear upon the public school in the course of its history. In addition, there has arisen in recent years, and especially in the postwar years of international tension and cold war, a number of professional propagandists who have preyed upon the public in order to attack the schools. By collecting financial contributions from individuals frightened by the threat of communism or by economic changes, these propagandists have been able to operate on a national scale and to attack the schools in various localities throughout the nation.

It should not be assumed, however, that all organized groups attack the school or that all of them seek to shape the school in their own interest—nor that a group which has attacked the school on a specific issue will necessarily be against the school on other issues. American society is extremely complex, and groups tend to align themselves differently from time to time, depending upon the issue. Furthermore, public action through organized groups has come to be an accepted practice in American society. Participation in group action is one of the ways in which the individual, usually powerless alone, can make his influence felt in public matters. It is to be expected, therefore, that if an individual wishes to influence the school, he will work through an organized group that represents his point of view and can make its voice heard.

The task of the teaching profession is not to find ways of circumventing organized groups, because there is no way of escaping them. Even if it were possible, it would not be wise to do, for these criticisms and pressures are often constructive and should be dealt with in a positive and statesmanlike fashion. The existence of organized groups presents the teaching profession with the problem of working out ways of dealing creatively with the criticisms and pressures which these groups bring to bear upon the school.

THE BASES OF CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION

If the profession of teaching is to handle educational controversies constructively, teachers and school officials must meet at least three conditions. First, they must be aware of what the issues are. This implies more than a recognition that certain individuals are discontented with the school and that others are satisfied. It requires that the differences of opinion giving rise to educational controversies be identified and assessed and their deep-lying social origins be understood.

Secondly, the ability to work with organized groups requires a high order of statesmanship that can be acquired only from thorough study of the structure and dynamics of community life and the techniques and strategy of social groups. The teaching profession often does not know who its friends are, though it is usually all too conscious of

its enemies. A realistic study of the more powerful social groups, including their purposes and their methods of operation, is essential to the formulation of plans for working effectively with the various organized interests.

Thirdly, members of the teaching profession need desperately to understand the bases of their right to educate children at all. Are teachers the mere servants of the community, compelled to do what they are told to do by whatever interest gains the upper hand in the community, or do they have certain professional obligations and rights which they are ethically bound to protect in the interest of their pupils? Unless and until the teaching profession is clear on an answer to these questions, it will not be able to work out ways of dealing constructively with educational disputes in the community and the nation.

The relation of the school to its social milieu is very complex, and only a few of the manifold and intricate aspects of this relationship can be examined in this chapter. The elements that will be considered are indicated by the following questions, which have guided the choice of selections:

1. In dealing with educational issues, on what grounds may teachers take positions contrary to those held by the public or by any element of it?
2. What are some of the more or less persistent points of tension which give rise to educational controversies from time to time?
3. In what parts of our culture are these tension points rooted?
4. How can teachers and school officials best cooperate with organized groups in efforts to improve the school?

Considerable emphasis is now being placed upon working with the public in the development and maintenance of educational programs. This tendency has much to be said for it, but it has obscured the unique position of the profession in the conduct of education, a position none too clear to begin with. Selection 91, by Smith, Stanley, and Shores, examines the right of the teacher to determine content and method and indicates the bases for his authority.

Selection 92, by Griffin, points out, among other things, that public discontent with the school is associated with changes in the nature of the community and the corresponding failure of both the public and the profession to make necessary changes in their conception of the school and its function. The general uneasiness which the public manifests toward its school is pin-pointed by an opinion study conducted by Elmo Roper and reported in *Life*, an excerpt of which is given in Selection 93.

Selections 94 and 95 deal with the focal points of public concern about the school. The first of these selections, by Horn, points to the fact that the social studies tend to be a continuous source of public interest. This field of study bears so directly upon the prejudices and the hopes of the public that it always receives a large share of attention. Another matter of constant public concern is the cost of education, especially when the national economy is in either an inflationary or a deflationary period and when a period of economic uncertainty is accompanied by a rapid increase in the school population.

The selection by Richey vividly describes the growth in school population which is currently swelling classroom enrollments far beyond the capacity of existing plants and available teaching personnel.

Naturally, such an unprecedented increase in school population has brought to the fore the issue of federal support. In the view of many people, the burden of education is becoming greater than the states and the local communities can bear alone. Hence, they wish to obtain federal support for the public schools. On the other hand, there are just as many people who, for various reasons, bitterly oppose any extension of federal aid. This issue is rather thoroughly explored in Selection 96.

All of these focal points of controversy emphasize the need for teachers and school administrators to learn to work effectively with organized groups, for such groups are the avenues through which opinions, valid or invalid, are made effective. This need, together with some suggestions for meeting it, is set forth in Selection 97.

91 • The Sources of Educational Authority

If you were challenged by a group in your community to show why you teach a certain piece of subject matter, or why you teach it the way in which you do, or why you are testing for certain learnings rather than for others, how would you answer? Suppose that the group tells you that what you are doing is wrong. On what grounds would you try to base your defense? You might cite facts about practices in other schools. You might attempt to show that the subject matter in question is covered in all the pertinent textbooks. You might plead that what you are doing is supported by the leading authorities on the subject. But suppose that such evidence is not accepted by the group and that they even question your right to decide the matter on which you are being challenged. How would you answer this questioning of your rights as a teacher? The following selection, by B. Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores, discusses this question and suggests the bases of the teacher's authority for deciding how he shall perform his tasks. The authors have borrowed heavily from a more extensive analysis by Kenneth D. Benne, in *A Conception of Authority*.

. . . The school is the agent of and derives its authority from the society that maintains it. In the words of the Commission on Social Studies of the American Historical Association, "Being a form of social action, education . . . is a function of a particular society at a particular time and place in history; it is rooted in some actual culture and expresses

the philosophy and recognized needs of that culture."¹ Behind this conception is the belief that the school is first of all an agency estab-

¹ American Historical Association, Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, *Conclusions and Recommendations of the Commission* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; 1934), p. 31. By permission.

[From B. Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores, *Fundamentals of Curriculum Development*, World Book Co., 1950, pp. 147-152. Reprinted by permission.]

lished by society for the expressed purpose of preparing the young to live in the society. Consequently, the teacher is necessarily the vicar of the community.

Three Views of Society as the Authority

Within the framework of the general agreement expressed in the above paragraph, there are several different versions of this position. The first version holds that the school is maintained by the state and that the teacher is the agent of the state. Hence, the educator derives his authority from the state and is properly subject in his teaching to the will of the state. This view rests on the assumption that the state is the authorized voice of society and that its commands express the will of the national community. While this notion of the office of the state has been widely held by political scientists, it is by no means universally accepted either by the political scientists or the peoples of the world. On the contrary, it has been pointed out that at any particular time the state operates through a limited body of men called the government; and, at best, this government never represents more than a part of the community.

This view of the state is the one that has always prevailed in the United States. The people of this country have never been willing to delegate to any government the definition of the moral and social ends of American society. Neither have they been willing to accept the position that the teaching in the public schools should be dictated by the existing government. From the beginning, the founding fathers insisted that in a democratic community the public school exists for the enlightenment of citizens, not for the inculcation of particular beliefs of the government in power.² Accordingly, the thesis that the educator derives his moral authority from the state cannot be maintained in the United States, for that view is incompatible both with the expressed will of American society and the principles of a democratic community.

A second variety of the position that educa-

tional authority is grounded in the society which it serves maintains that the teacher's authority rests upon the consensus of opinion in the local community in which he teaches. Unlike the other viewpoints considered under the discussion of the issue of authority in education, this position has rarely been formally stated and defended, but it is implicit in the statements of a large number of practical school men. Indeed, it is not unlikely that the majority of the educational profession in the United States consciously or unconsciously hold this view. It is in line with the long-standing American tradition that the primary responsibility for the schools should lie in the local community.

This view overlooks the fact that the local community is a part of a larger national community. It also overlooks the fact that at any given moment the prevailing opinion in the local community may represent, not the considered judgment of the people but a temporary conclusion based on prejudice, passion, and ignorance. All too frequently, moreover, the school administrator has mistaken the voice of the dominant group in the community for the voice of the united community. Consequently, while the wise educator will never ignore the viewpoints and opinions held by the people of the locality which he serves, he cannot accept those opinions and viewpoints as the final definition of his moral authority and responsibility.

The third version of the theory under discussion—that the educator derives his authority from the society he serves—holds that this authority resides, not in the commands of the state or in the partial and transitory opinions of the local community but in the fundamental moral and intellectual commitments constituting the core of the culture. The quality that distinguishes a society from a mere collection of individuals or groups is precisely this common participation in a vital community of feeling and belief. Moreover, only as the child shares in the life of the society into which he is born can he become either a responsible member of it or grow into his fullest stature as a human being. Apart from this participation, he will be little more than a biological animal. It is by means of his

² For the attitude of the founding fathers toward education, see *First Yearbook* of the John Dewey Society, W. H. Kilpatrick (ed.), "The Teacher and Society," pp. 4-12.

membership in the common life of the social group that he learns the attitudes, the motivations, the language, the patterns of thought, the standards of judgment, the skills, and the ways of acting that constitute his *human*, as distinguished from his biological, nature. But the child really shares in the life of the society only as he comes to share in the common ends and purposes by virtue of which the society is a society rather than a mere random collection of individuals. Hence, the induction of the young person into society means, first of all, his transformation into a human being who has built into the warp and woof of his personality the fundamental intellectual and moral commitments characteristic of his society.

The Democratic Tradition as the Source of Moral Authority

Applying this principle to our own American society, it is clear that the educator derives his moral authority primarily from the democratic tradition, for that tradition undoubtedly represents the deepest moral and intellectual commitments of the American people. It is true that many individuals in our society would, as individuals, feel that their commitment to their religious beliefs is even more fundamental than their commitment to the democratic ideals. Yet the American people as a nation have committed themselves to no one particular religious belief; and fortunately, for the most part, the central ethical cores of the majority of religious traditions present in America are, by the statement of their own adherents, largely compatible with the central ethical conception of democracy.

In accepting the democratic tradition as the ultimate basis of his authority, the educator must guard against two major fallacies in interpretation. To say that the school derives its authority to teach from the intellectual and moral traditions of the people it serves has frequently meant that the chief business of the school is to indoctrinate youth in the tenets of a final conception of the good and of the true received from the past. This interpretation assumes that the tradition is absolute and unchanging. But it is one of the distin-

guishing characteristics of the democratic tradition that it is, by its very nature, a growing and changing ideal. Furthermore, it is an ideal based on the intelligent participation of all the people. The democratic educator must not be more concerned with the making of adherents, even of adherents to the democratic creed itself, than he is with the development of intelligent individuals able and willing to evaluate, choose, and judge for themselves.

On the other hand, the democratic tradition does represent a definite intellectual and moral orientation. It is not equally hospitable to all ideas or to all types of behavior. Consequently, the democratic educator must not make the error of assuming that he can be indifferent to the character and the beliefs that the students learn in his school. Education inevitably involves the making of choices and decisions. Moreover, it inescapably involves a certain amount of indoctrination, if only as a result of the way the school is organized and conducted. The democratic educator will make these choices and decisions, and shape the character of his school, in a manner compatible with democratic ideals and practices.

TWO BASES OF THE EDUCATOR'S AUTHORITY

It is clear from the preceding discussion that the authority of the educator ultimately rests upon two distinct but related bases. As an expert, his authority rests on his verified and tested knowledge in those areas in which his services are needed both by society and by his students. This expertness is derived from two sources: his knowledge of the needs and interests of children and of the way the learning process can best be conducted to attain the ends of education; and his knowledge of the materials and techniques required by the students in their growth and development. In both cases, it is important to note that expert authority is limited by the extent to which the teacher actually possesses tested and verified knowledge. It is also limited by the extent to which this knowledge coincides with the needs and purposes of society and of the

learner. Expert authority, in other words, does not extend to the determination of purposes, except in so far as tested knowledge is a factor in the determination of purposes.⁸

Beyond the range of expert authority, the authority of the teacher rests on the basic intellectual and moral commitments of the society he serves. In our society, the teacher's authority is based on the American democratic tradition. The American educator, in the last analysis, is commissioned to educate in the spirit of this tradition; whatever authority he possesses must be interpreted primarily in its terms. It is on the basis of this tradition that he is at times justified—nay, obligated—to oppose and resist either the arbitrary actions of governments or the partial and temporary opinions of local citizens when they adversely affect the work of the public school to the point that it can no longer effectively perform the vital function assigned to it.

This right and obligation of the educator, however, does not endow him with final authority in the determination of the ends, the processes, or the content of education. Final authority in all these respects rests with the

⁸ For an able discussion of both expert and pedagogical authority, see Kenneth D. Benne, *A Conception of Authority*, pp. 34-48, 70-113.

enlightened and informed judgment of the whole people. The educator's duty consists of the right and obligation to appeal from the arbitrary decision of a particular government or of a particular locality to the mature judgment of the national community. In the performance of this duty, he will call the attention of the public to the application of democratic principles and of verified knowledge to the educational issue in dispute. In the long run, however, the educator as educator, whatever his judgment as a person, is bound by the considered decision of the national community.

As the above discussion suggests, these two bases of the educator's authority are not of equal scope and significance. His authority as the vicar of the community is both broader and deeper than his authority as an expert in the field of education; it is from the former rather than from the latter that he derives the ends and the purposes that shape the entire educational enterprise. Indeed, it is true that, in a democratic society, expert authority can be derived from the democratic ideal. Expertness has a certain status in any society, but the fullest respect for true and verified knowledge is possible only in a society in which decisions are, in theory at least, based on the informed judgment of the people.

92 • The Social Roots of Public Unrest About the Schools

Although the public has always been concerned about the quality as well as the quantity of education its children receive, the public interest today is somewhat different from what it used to be. The following selection, by one of the leading authorities on social-studies education, describes this difference and relates it to changes in community life.

For one thing, the interest of the public in the school is now specialized. In the early community, people were interested in the school as a whole, but today their interests lie more often in some special aspect of the school which they perceive as affecting their

[From Alan F. Griffin, "Community Pressures and Education," in Twelfth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, *Educational Freedom in an Age of Anxiety*, Harper and Bros., 1953, pp. 149-151, 154-156, 159-166. Reprinted by permission.]

welfare and social status. The emergence of these specialized interests in the school has accompanied the passing of the closely knit communal neighborhood.

After making this point clear, Griffin goes on to show that the teaching profession has itself become a special-interest group, seeking to protect its own status and welfare. Finally, Alan F. Griffin locates much of the public uneasiness about the school in the fact that today teachers are emphasizing pupil thinking, and, since thinking involves doubting, parents often object on the grounds that children are upset emotionally and that they are led to question the beliefs which they learned in the home.

Misunderstandings between the schools and various segments of the public have been piling up for at least two or three decades. Rapid changes in the nature of the community, in the motivations and concerns of groups interested in the school, in the patterns of school financing and school control and in the teacher's conception of the scope of his job, have not been paralleled by changes in our conceptions of the school and its functions. Each of these sets of changes deserves fuller examination than can be given to it here. •

At this late date, there is no need to elaborate the proposition that our lives have been profoundly affected by the disappearance of primary communities. No amount of nostalgic yearning will restore the days when families depended upon local people and institutions for virtually everything they could not do for themselves. Surely it is possible by now simply to recognize as fact our transition from the days when everyone upon whom a person consciously depended was a fellow member of the local community to our present state of impersonal interdependence whose ramifications extend beyond any individual's capacity for full understanding. The vague realization that other hands than ours produce the food we eat or the clothes we wear is obviously a pallid substitute for personal acquaintance and continuous face-to-face relationships with the farmer, the butcher, the baker, and the tailor.

The dissolution of the primary community has, of course, been accompanied by the growth of community in a quite different sense. The ordinary American has many concerns and some contacts that extend far beyond the locality in which he resides. Improvements in communication and travel have permitted the proliferation of organizations—local, state, national, and occasionally international—which bring together persons with common pursuits, interests, needs, tastes, or aspirations. The modern individual may feel more "at home" in a gathering of persons from all over the country engaged in his own profession, trade, or line of business than in any random group of his fellow townsmen. An active supporter of liberal causes often has more numerous, more continuous, and deeper relationships with liberals from other states than with the conservatives in his own ward, precinct, or apartment building—and vice versa. An adult in America can, by and large, build up for himself genuine relationships of common interest and concern, choosing or stumbling upon his associates without much reference to geographic limitations.

In the days of primary communities, persistent lay interest in schools was largely confined to parents. It is no great exaggeration to say that public schools in America were created through the efforts of parents to provide for their children "a better go at life" (the expression is borrowed from H. Gordon

Hullfish) than they had themselves enjoyed. At first this meant largely a chance at books, and those without bookish inclinations rarely went far beyond the rudiments of the three R's. The adjustments of the high-school curriculum to the needs of a vast new clientele, largely nonbookish in their interests, are too familiar to need discussion here, although there is evidence that even this matter is not yet fully understood by the general public.

Second only to the interest of parents in the opportunities of their own children was the interest of certain public-spirited citizens in education as a means of community improvement. If democracy meant the sharing of all citizens in public decisions, then each community had a vested interest in the quality of its own electorate. This view probably had less emotional force behind it than did the aspirations of parents for their own young, but parents as a group were happy to accept it, along with its corollary that those with no children of school age had as much to gain from better schools as anyone else and could properly be expected to share in the privilege of paying for them.

Those who took an interest in schools, then, were concerned either on behalf of one or more children or on behalf of the local community as a whole. The first of these two concerns remains largely unchanged. The second, with the disappearance of the primary community, has become ambiguous and to a certain extent unreal.

For example, the local physician in a primary community had in the school only the sort of interest any other citizen might have. Today, as a member of a great and flourishing "interest-community" within which his life finds much of its meaning, he may often be concerned *as physician* with the attitudes toward the medical profession, and especially toward methods for defraying the costs of medical service, which may be picked up by school children, not merely in his own locality, but throughout the nation. Similarly, leaders of organized labor may be disturbed lest "middle-class" teachers impart to youth an unsympathetic attitude toward the aspirations and practices of unions; religious and

racial groups—minority or majority—may seek to purge the curriculum of materials which might convey to the young adverse attitudes toward themselves; bankers, businessmen, industrialists, or publishers may be concerned that youth in schools all over the land come to appreciate their special contributions to the general welfare.

From all these points of view, and a host of others, children are seen not merely as youngsters trying to grow up but as prospective voters, as important influences upon their voting parents, or even as present and prospective customers. Even teachers, themselves an interest-community of no mean proportions, have been known to question whether a given novel or short story ought to be read by students if it presents schools and teachers in an unfavorable light. Teachers, too, are at the mercy of public opinion as they seek to raise their own living standards.

There was a similar divergence of interest in the primary community, of course; but the school's public in each locality was bound together by a deep common interest in the development of children for their own sake, rather than as potential means to ends of other sorts. Today, it is quite normal for a member of some secondary community to be deeply concerned over what is taught in schools a thousand miles from his place of residence. This sort of concern, however, has only an indirect relation, if any, to the welfare of the students being taught; its direct orientation is toward the purposes, broad or narrow, of the particular interest-community to which the individual gives his allegiance. Thus the old question, "Is our school serving the common interests of this locality?" has been converted to the quite different question, "Are the schools everywhere serving the common interests of *people like me*?"

IV

By no means least among the factors which have changed school-community relations is the emergence of an interest-community composed of teachers themselves. To an astonish-

ing degree, teachers from all parts of the country have found in one another the sustaining sympathy and understanding which everyone must find somewhere if he is to lead anything like a normal life. Through a host of local, regional, state, and national organizations, put together on all sorts of bases, through professional journals at many different levels of specialization, through the marked similarities of emphasis that can be found among institutions preparing teachers, through innumerable face-to-face encounters at conventions and national meetings, teachers have been drawn together in the same process that has drawn other interest-communities together and thus helped to pull local communities apart.

To an increasing extent, teachers identify themselves with their profession. They actively seek the advice, support, and approval of fellow professionals, meanwhile recognizing the approval of fellow townspeople as something that unfortunately has to be cultivated.

Most teachers are acutely conscious that the basic education which children once got from the local community can no longer be counted upon. In substantial numbers they have acceded to the view that all inadequacies of the local community impose new duties upon the school. This view, widely upheld in teachers' colleges, rests upon an argument that runs:

An adequate education ought to meet all the needs of youth.

Schools are our instrument for the provision of adequate education.

Therefore, any needs of youth not otherwise met become the proper responsibility of the school.

Such a conception greatly extends the scope of the school's program. To the school's former tasks of helping children to reflect upon the values, attitudes, and ideas they have picked up elsewhere and to develop the skills they need in extending their own horizons is added the enormous task of providing or even creating an actual community

within which values, attitudes, and beliefs may be fostered.

This conception of the school's function is certainly not an ignoble one. To many people, however (including the present writer), it seems to suffer from two defects, either of which would probably be fatal:

1. The public has never seen itself as giving to the school any such unlimited mandate.

2. Probably no single institution could hope to discharge successfully such enormous responsibilities.

Pointing out these defects (or rather suggesting them, since space will not permit the development of an argument for either one) in no way disparages the gallantry of those who have tried, with some success, both to make of the school a kind of interest-community for children comparable to the interest-communities enjoyed by adults and to force an entrance for youth into a few corners of an adult life which seems not to need them and offers no place for them. The fact remains, however, that some of the school's pretensions have frightened other institutions into a resistance which the school can ill afford to fight. Angry charges that the school has "usurped" the functions of home or church get apparent support from grandiose claims to almost unlimited functions.

It would be impossible, however, to conceive the task of the teacher narrowly enough to avoid public criticism altogether. The most limited conception of the school's function that any professional teacher could accept would almost certainly run afoul of some of the purposes of organized and unorganized adult groups. The mere intent to cultivate independent thinking, if pursued seriously, is certain to affect the values and attitudes of young people in ways which some groups will regard as highly undesirable.

So long as teachers could believe that the ability to think involved no more than sound deduction from premises, it was possible to put the child through a set of exercises within some closed postulational system—geometry, for example—with some confidence that the "reasoning power" thus generated could in later life be applied wherever it was needed.

The study of the natural sciences could give him an appreciation of the tremendous results of the application of thought to the physical world around us. Other "content courses," such as history or civics, could confine themselves to acquainting him with "the facts." Nothing was more certain than that he would need "the facts" at that distant date when he could begin thinking for himself about the major problems of his own adult life.

Today, of course, nothing is more fully established in educational psychology than the proposition that thinking is generated out of some conflict within the experience of the thinker. There is no way to *constrain* thought in another person, or even in oneself. A condition of doubt, confusion, or puzzlement is the indispensable starting point. Moreover—and it is this fact which is at the root of much present misunderstanding—even a state of doubt will not lead into thinking unless the matter at issue is one of real concern. Anyone who finds himself confused over a matter to which he attaches no great importance can simply dismiss it and go about his business, as most of us do several times a day.

It follows that any teacher who seriously seeks to promote thinking among students must take as his point of departure the ideas, values, and attitudes to which the student has become strongly attached. These, of course, will for the most part have been picked up, as we say, "around the house." Nor does anyone need to be told that the deep convictions of youth, the "certainties" which they must take on uncritically at an early age if they are ever to become people at all, differ radically from one household to another. To take an extreme example, the "received tradition" of the boy whose father is active in the local chamber of commerce will probably differ in certain fairly predictable ways from that of the youngster whose father devotes most of his time to the affairs of the local CIO council.

Leaving out of account the fact that today's children must somehow learn to reconcile the many divergent interests and purposes represented by strong groups in our society, and

confining ourselves solely to the single matter of developing in each child the ability to think for himself, it seems perfectly clear that the teacher will again and again find it necessary to challenge or bring into question ideas, lines of argument, or even concepts which are taken for granted as obvious both by an individual child and by the adults from whom he absorbed them. Even under the best possible conditions, a report of some single remark out of context may lead a parent to the opinion that a teacher is deliberately seeking to undermine his child's home training. Cases of this kind, however, can ordinarily be handled by a frank discussion between parent and teacher which makes clear the aims and the character of the activity from which the disturbing remark was abstracted. Nearly all parents are at least as interested as are teachers in having their children grow into self-directing, independent persons, able to reach their own judgments on the basis of the best evidence they can get.

The situation is enormously complicated, however, when the parent decides to talk it over, not with the teacher or the school authorities, but with a group which is working earnestly and vigorously to win public support for the very idea or attitude about which the teacher has found it necessary to raise a question. The members of this group are giving time and money to their cause; small wonder that they are affronted by the suggestion that their own tax money is being used in the school to defeat their ends.

The teacher knows all this, of course. And teachers are not less cautious or less circumspect than other people. They do not challenge the unexamined views of youngsters in important areas because they enjoy "upsetting" children, any more than physicians give inoculations for the fun of sticking needles into people. Teachers would vastly prefer to avoid trouble than to court it. If they persist, nevertheless, in a line of action which carries the constant risk of offending some community group, it is solely because they can find no other way of doing a job which almost everyone will recognize—in abstract terms, at least—as an important part of their proper

professional function. If the generation of doubt about matters of genuine concern is a necessary preliminary to thoughtful inquiry, we may expect that conscientious teachers will continue to risk misunderstanding in order to do their work.

It is easy to dismiss as baseless the genuine anxiety which effective classroom teaching is likely to arouse among earnest, sincere parents who do not fully understand what is going on. But any realistic appraisal of what we may fairly call the Great Misunderstanding requires the admission that this anxiety is not *totally* without foundation.

The person who wants a child to think must stimulate doubt, must challenge unexamined ideas, must generate some degree of concerned perplexity. His intent, of course, is to help the child work his way back to security again, by a process which both extends the range of his knowledge and increases his willingness to *rely* upon his own thinking as a means of resolving doubts when they arise in the future. But the world is currently a sounding board for many competing propagandas, and many individuals with whom children come into contact, directly or indirectly, are interested not in stimulating thought but in selling a bill of goods. A few such persons are undoubtedly scattered among the ranks of the teaching profession. And the unhappy fact is that the propagandist generally begins, just as the teacher begins, by seeking to arouse doubts and perplexities in the minds of those with whom he is working. The teacher who gets a student to wonder about the soundness of one or another of his opinions in order to

motivate inquiry will often be undistinguishable *at that moment* from the propagandist who is "softening up" his victim in preparation for trotting out his own prefabricated "solution" to the problem. It is true that a trained observer can generally tell the difference, but even he needs a little time to make sure.

Most teachers understand the reflective process well enough to get it started and to help youngsters carry it forward. They have seen few occasions, however, to formulate what they are doing into a statement which will communicate to anyone but another teacher. Yet this much of communication will have to take place between teachers and parents during the next few years if the schools are to retain even a simple permission to do their work. It is not reasonable to expect parents to remain quietly trusting while the teacher—usually a stranger—carries on an activity which may be, for all the parent knows, the first step in a planned propaganda campaign, and which, by its very nature, bears and *must* bear a real resemblance to such a step. And even if the parent acquits the teacher of any improper intention, he may feel that his child has been rendered more vulnerable, at least for a time, to the propaganda which he is certain to encounter from many sources outside the school. Sooner or later, either parents must come to understand *why* the unexamined opinions of children must be called into question and made the basis for an inquiry into relevant factual materials, or they will simply refuse to sanction the process.

93 • What the People Think About Their Schools

Almost constantly we hear arguments and witness controversies about the schools. But are these indicative of what the people really think about the kind of education their children are getting? Could it be that the criticisms come chiefly from a small number of malcontents and that the great majority of the people feel fairly well satisfied with the

schools? With this question in mind, *Life* asked Elmo Roper to make a survey of public opinion with respect to the public schools. In the following selection, some of Roper's more interesting findings are reported in summary form. It should be borne in mind that his findings are statistical and are based on a national survey. Consequently they do not necessarily hold for any one community or locality.

Once every year, by law and by choice, a huge majority of the United States public packs all its children from five to seventeen off to some sort of a public school. Some citizens accept this right to a free education as matter-of-factly as the Aga Khan accepts his weight in diamonds. But to many others the first bong of the school bell signals the start of another round of argument and controversy. The schools, according to them, are very good or very bad; they're getting better or they're getting worse; they're too progressive or too traditional; they're spending too much or they're spending too little. Nothing is exactly right. . . .

Life asked public opinion expert Elmo Roper to conduct a nation-wide survey to find out just where the people stand. In general, the survey shows, the people think that things are good but nowhere near good enough.

Take, for instance, a general question: Are the school-children being taught more useful and worthwhile things than they were twenty years ago? A great many people (67 per cent), especially college graduates and those in the highest income brackets, are sure that this is so. But another question shows that there is still plenty of room for improvement. The question: Are you satisfied with the public school system in your own community? Now only 33.4 per cent are really satisfied with their local school—38.2 per cent of them are "only fairly satisfied" and 16.8 per cent are not satisfied at all.

Obviously, something should be done. But nobody agrees exactly what this something is. There is the teacher problem. By law, in most

states, teachers are hired and paid almost entirely on the basis of their teaching experience and their own hardbought education. But the people think the most important attribute is the teacher's ability to handle children—38 per cent value this more than the teacher's education (29 per cent) or experience (16.3 per cent). As for experience, it ranks only slightly above the teacher's morals and in some cases (people over fifty years old) the teacher's morals themselves are considered more important. A large majority thinks grade school has by far the greatest influence on a child and presumably that the grade school teacher is most important. But in most states elementary teachers must meet lower requirements and get paid less than those in high school. In general teachers rank high in the people's esteem—higher, in most cases, than the local clergyman—and 43.9 per cent agree that today's teacher is really underpaid. But when they have to choose between spending their limited money on teachers' salaries or on new school buildings they split evenly down the middle. In their own community, as a matter of fact, they slightly favor the building side of the question.

Sometimes the people are magnificently inconsistent—especially when they get down to the curriculum job of the present-day high school. Here 86.6 per cent say that its duty is to supply vocational training, build character, polish personality and so on. But when they were asked what they missed most in their own high school education, three people wished they'd had more math, English, grammar and spelling for every one who wished that he had been given more vocational work.

[From a Roper Survey, *Life Magazine*, 29 (Oct. 16, 1950), p. 11. Reprinted by permission.]

In this welter of indecision one thing is certain: today's parent is inclined to feel that the school, good or bad, is just as responsible as he for most of the upbringing of his child. In the old days it was felt that the school's job was to teach reading, writing, arithmetic and little else. But now, the survey shows, some 90 per cent of the general public feel that it is also the school's business to train the whole child—even to the extent of teaching him honesty, fair play, consideration of others and a sense of right and wrong. Most of them agree that sex should be taught in the schools. And in rural farm areas and in the South a majority feels that the schools should go on to teach religion as well.

Having virtually turned their children over to the schools, many parents are inclined to let well enough alone. Less than half of them are aware that our schools, jammed with children, face an increasingly terrible classroom shortage in the next five years. Only slightly more than half the people polled had ever heard of recent proposals for Federal aid to education. But of those who had heard about it, 65.4 per cent were for it. Some (30.2 per cent) thought Federal aid should be given to

parochial schools because, they said, if any school needs Federal money it should get it without discrimination. More (45.2 per cent) thought Federal aid should be limited to the public schools and gave different reasons. Most Protestants pointed out that the free schools were already available to everybody. Most of the Catholics against aid for parochial schools confidently claimed that their church had enough money already. The Jewish majority lined up behind the classic argument that the church and state are separate and should stay that way. Again looking into the future, 41.3 per cent thought that children of all races and colors should go to school together everywhere. Even the white South, asked if it would ever happen, thought that it would some day. Asked the same question, nearly a third of the Negroes thought that it never would.

Taken all in all, the survey makes one inescapable point. When Americans think about education they are complacent as a whole and dissatisfied in particular; they feel that the over-all situation is sunny but not so good at the school down the street.

94 • *Social Studies as a Focus of Public Unrest*

In the history of public controversy over the schools, we are struck by the persistence of public concern with the social studies. In almost every community conflict over the schools, the social studies sooner or later become an object of criticism. They are said to be biased in favor of one or another group or position. They favor the United Nations, or they emphasize isolationism. They are against private enterprise and economic individualism, or they are against the common man in his struggle with monopolies and industrial regimentation. No matter what their subject matter or how they are taught, the social studies never satisfy everybody.

This perennial dissatisfaction is due to a number of causes. In the following selection, taken from the monumental investigation of social education by a committee of the American Historical Association, Ernest Horn points out some of these causes. Horn emphasizes the complexity of social problems and the difficulties of studying them in school. He shows that the study of social problems will probably always run the risk of

stirring up public reaction. He points out clearly that, even were the social studies limited to history and other factual subjects, there would still be strong possibilities of indoctrination and of public controversy. In spite of all the unavoidable difficulties, however, Horn affirms the obligation of the school to deal with controversial questions.

The trend in current discussions is to apply the terms indoctrination and propaganda rather loosely to practices that are held to be objectionable. Just what is objectionable, or why, is not usually defined explicitly. As a result, many discussions degenerate into mere vituperation and the real issues are obscured. Yet there are real issues, the most vital of which are: First, shall the schools set up a social program and attempt to realize it through the inculcation and control of attitudes, habits, knowledge, patterns of thought, and value norms; *i.e.*, shall they inculcate "sound" doctrines? Second, shall controversial issues be studied, and if so, by what methods? Third, shall freedom of teaching and discussion prevail? Fourth, shall the schools teach pupils what to think or how to think? Fifth, shall symbolism, slogans, conditioning, or emotional appeal be utilized; and if so, in what manner? These issues are obviously so closely interrelated that a decision on any one of them must influence the decisions on all the others. They will be clarified by directing attention away from the attempt to define or evaluate propaganda and indoctrination and to a consideration of the issues themselves.

If any valid conclusion with regard to these issues is to be reached, however, certain realities must be faced squarely: the vastness and complexity of the modern world, the conflicts of ideologies, the limited abilities of students, the nature of thinking and understanding, and the inadequacy or inaccessibility, both in schools and in communities at large, of sources of data on social problems. A consideration of these realities is therefore interwoven with the following discussion.

I. SHALL THE SCHOOLS HAVE A SOCIAL PROGRAM?

The manifest difficulty of making a vast and complicated world intelligible leads to a conviction, more and more widely accepted, that the schools should present to students a social program that is explicit, unified, and dynamic. According to this point of view, social education should be deliberate and purposeful, not haphazard and aimless. It should seek to give a valid description of modern society—its phenomena, its processes, its trends, and its problems. Even more important, it should seek to select and inculcate certain value norms rather than others. In short, it should seek a plan in which the ends and instruments of social living are seen in one intelligible and integrated pattern.

It is not easy to get a valid understanding of our modern social world, even in its descriptive outlines, and much less so in its normative aspects. "The world in which the individual must live and act and exercise the rights of citizenship transcends his powers of comprehension."¹ People of all ages have been baffled by the problems confronting them. Even a primitive or relatively static society, with an almost perfect and unchanging consensus as to the ends and techniques of living, is difficult for the mind to encompass; modern society is so vast, so complicated, and so rapid and uneven in its evolution that a unified description or interpretation of it is well-nigh impossible. Indeed, a single aspect of the so-

¹ George S. Counts, *The Social Foundations of Education*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934, p. 517.

cial process, such as the distribution of wealth, or the use of marginal land, cannot, with its ramifications, be readily comprehended.

If the child, or even the adult, is to grasp their meaning and significance, the various parts of the social process, as well as the unified whole, must be reconstructed on simpler models. These models, if well made, are valid in a pragmatic sense; that is, they make possible both efficient thought and action. They must not be oversimplified or removed too far from the world they represent, since they can maintain their vitality and validity only through constant references to concrete realities. Thus the concept that one has of marginal lands, to remain authentic and dynamic, must constantly be related to soils, rainfall, and location of specific areas; to the invention of machinery and new methods of farming; to markets; to the quality of life of the farmers of such lands; and even to social policy. This last relationship is especially significant, for the social studies pertain not merely to objective circumstances but to custom, social interest, and human purpose.

The task of building an authentic and acceptable picture of these ends and instruments of society calls for wisdom and scholarship of the highest order. This conclusion seems inescapable in view of the enormous amount of knowledge needed as a basis for thinking about modern social problems; the extent, diffusion, and inaccessibility of the necessary basic data; and the time as well as the technical skill required to discover and to interpret these data and to organize them into usable form. And not merely is competence required, but co-operation, and the use of all the resources of science, philosophy, and common sense.

* * *

No authoritative and complete description of the goals and instruments of American society is as yet available. Meanwhile, the schools must run. Those responsible for their operation must, with such co-operation as they can secure, make the best decisions they can, however tentative they may be. Various committees have made substantial progress in the accomplishment of this task. Educators

have, moreover, many related problems that are distinctively professional: the determination of the special province of the school in developing public opinion, the decision as to what and how much social education the school ought to undertake, the making of curricula and their adaptation to different levels of development, the selection of instructional equipment, the adoption of efficient methods, and the appraisal of results.

II. SHALL CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES BE TAUGHT?

The Lack of Consensus on Public Questions

The establishment of a definite constructive program assumes either a reasonable consensus among the leaders in social thought or the dominance of the ideology of some group in power. But the divergence of views on vital problems of the day is a matter of common observation. It is shown in an impressive fashion by Pierce and by Raup in their studies of the social and educational programs of certain organized interests in America. For example, Raup studied the position taken by important organizations on such matters as the principle of *laissez-faire* in business, naval and military preparedness, capitalism, and the rights of private property. On these problems, the views held by the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the Daughters of the American Revolution are almost diametrically opposed to those held by the People's Lobby, the League for Industrial Democracy, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Indeed, surprising differences are found even on questions that are usually regarded to be matters of general agreement. For example, Latham, in a study of concepts concerning trespass, and Yates, in an investigation of concepts concerning slander and freedom of speech, found that individuals not only disagreed with one another but also with the decisions of the courts. In addition to the diversity of opinion among various groups, and perhaps contributing to it, there are,

moreover, as Merriam points out, conflicts among the loyalties given by the individual himself to the different groups of which he is a member: the family, the church, the circle of friends, political party, occupational group, and various other cultural affiliations.

The Policy of the School

What the policy of the school should be, in view of this lack of unanimity, is still debated. Some see in the lack of consensus the need for the dominance of one ideology—a dominance achieved through the scholarly authority of leaders in social thought, by centralized educational control, or even by political power, as in Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy, or Nazi Germany. Dominance is demanded, according to this view, not only to build social solidarity but also to make the task of learning tolerable. In contrast, others hold that the school should not be expected to resolve differences that society itself cannot harmonize. To those who hold this conviction, two alternatives are open: first, to attempt to eliminate all controversial issues from the school; second, to include such issues but leave the students to arrive at their own conclusions as a result of their consideration of the evidence. Correlative to this second alternative are the proposals to “teach both sides of the question” and to “teach pupils how to think, not what to think.” The latter of these proposals is also made by those who would remove controversial issues from the school. Nevertheless, the trend of both public and professional opinion and the practice of superior teachers has turned definitely in favor of teaching controversial issues.

* * *

It is not to be expected that divergencies of opinion on public questions will ever be permanently resolved. Never in history have the American people been of one mind, not even during the War of Independence. Because these differences cannot be settled once and for all, we must be open-minded, must provide free discussion, and must seek progressively and experimentally to discover better solutions. Social policies must always be tentative.

The Need for Intellectualization

The most crucial task involved in the study of controversial issues in the school is the achievement of what Dewey has called intellectualization. The more controversial the issue, the more likely it is that the student will attack it in an emotional and prejudiced spirit. The need for training in the intellectualization of social problems is paramount. It constitutes, indeed, one of the strongest arguments for including controversial issues in the school. For this training cannot be given by talking about the abstract principles of open-mindedness, the importance of careful thinking, and the need for sympathetic understanding of the other person's point of view. It must be given in the direct and critical consideration of the issues themselves.

Objective thinking about controversial issues is undoubtedly promoted by the practice and idealization of two safeguards long recognized as fundamental to research in the natural sciences—the use of the negative hypothesis and the search for negative data. These two safeguards are even more crucial in the study of social problems, not only because the solutions are more elusive but also because of the greater likelihood that custom, prejudice, and wishful thinking may hamper or frustrate the intellectualizing of the problems. As applied to controversial issues, the negative hypothesis may well be the opponent's point of view, and the negative data the facts and arguments that he presents. The student should come to see, moreover, that these two principles are more than techniques; they are ideals—the foundations of intellectual honesty.

Indoctrination Through Subjects

Since a lack of consensus concerning the social program is inevitable, and since obvious difficulties accompany the presentation of controversial issues in the school, it has been suggested that such issues be omitted and that the provision for social education be restricted to giving a sound background in history, geography, and the structural aspects of government. It is argued that these subjects are

more nearly limited to matters of fact, that consequently there is a greater consensus with regard to them, and that they may well constitute, in the long run, the best mental equipment for the study of modern problems. This proposal gives a false sense of security, for if the content of these subjects is selected and organized so as to afford background and orientation for the realistic study of modern problems, controversies cannot and should not be kept out. Indoctrination, although indirect, is inevitable, and, indeed, it may be more effective because of its very subtlety and indirectness.

No historian, for example, writes all he knows about any phase of civilization that he treats. He does not usually attempt to find out everything about it. His selection of data, his organization, and even his style are determined by some purpose or point of view. History, even that of a remote period, is rewritten from time to time, not solely because of the discovery of new or the discrediting of old monuments, but because of the establishment of new points of view, new purposes and new hypotheses.* And each rewriting makes a different selection, organization, and interpretation of historical data. For example, history containing little or no mention of wars is *prima facie* anti-militaristic, perhaps as much so as to dwell on arguments against war. It indoctrinates by omission and by the creation of other interests. On the other hand, history giving great space to the undeniable heroism of soldiers and sailors in war is *prima facie* militaristic. It indoctrinates by selection and emphasis. The trend in textbooks in American history during recent years, for example, has been away from military and political history, and toward the economic, social, and cultural. In biography many military heroes have been supplanted by leaders in social and mechanical invention. And even the history of wars is rewritten in order to create new attitudes. Witness the recent accounts of the Revolutionary War. Nor has all this gone unnoticed, as is shown in the legislation of many states, in the activities of Thompson at Chicago, and in the steady pressures of such groups as the Daughters of the American

Revolution. The selection, organization, and interpretation of the data on geography and civics are no less powerful influences for indoctrination.

Even when accurately and competently taught, geography, history, and civics must inevitably exert a profound influence upon the students' thought and attitudes about modern life. And when, as is common both in Europe and in the United States, the treatment in the text and in the classroom is narrow, prejudiced, and jingoistic, the students' ideas are warped as badly as in the biased and direct treatment of modern issues. Truth is always somewhat distorted in school textbooks and courses of study. A student who has obtained his knowledge of the history and geography of the world in an American school would, to a large degree, find the world as pictured in German schools to be queer and unfamiliar. An important part of the nationalistic indoctrination in French schools is the omission or cursory treatment of the history, geography, and social problems of other countries. Such practice leads inevitably to a lack of sympathy and understanding.

Indoctrination by Description

One more delusion needs to be dispelled: the belief that we can eliminate controversy and prevent indoctrination by limiting teaching and study to the descriptive aspects of society. Teach the facts, it is urged, and let the students judge for themselves. To be sure, we need facts and plenty of them. But facts do not select, emphasize, and organize themselves. These processes are performed by some individual, working under the guidance of some norm, some point of view, and some hypothesis, conscious or unconscious. And the most insidious of these directive influences, as many have pointed out, are those of which the author or teacher is unaware.

Suppose, for example, that the student is presented with a vivid picture of the conditions of home life at each decile of income. These descriptions, if reiterated, would undoubtedly exercise powerful formative influences upon his conception of and attitude toward the distribution of wealth. What view

states. While 31.8 percent of the public elementary-school teachers in the country had less than four years of college, the range among the states is from 2.5 percent in Arizona to 99.0 percent in South Dakota.

The average salaries paid classroom teachers determine, at least in part, the kinds of teachers a community can hire for its schools. While the average annual salary of all public-school classroom teachers in the country is \$3605, the range among the states is from \$4800 in California to \$1741 in Mississippi. Great inequalities in salaries can mean inequalities in competence.

Teaching load also helps to determine the pupil's educational opportunity. While on the average the instructional staff (all who teach more than half time) had 24.1 pupils each, the range among the states was from 14.6 pupils per teacher in North Dakota to 30.6 pupils per teacher in Alabama. Teachers in some states, for example, Alabama and Mississippi, altho the poorest paid, must care for the largest numbers of children.

DIFFERENCES IN ABILITY AND EFFORT

The states with larger proportions of school-age children tend to have less than the average financial ability to support their public schools. For example, South Carolina with 642 school-age children per 1000 wage-earning adults (age 25-64) had an estimated income per capita of \$951, while New York with 305 school-age children per 1000 wage-earning adults had an estimated per-capita income of \$2038.

When the income of the people is considered in direct relation to the school-age population only, some states have to tax themselves much more heavily than others in order to raise a specified amount of money per child 5 thru 17 years of age.

The amount of effort which the states actually made in 1950-51 to support whatever program of public education they were then providing is indicated in a general way by the percent of their income payments which

was spent for education. This ranged from 1.75 percent in Rhode Island to 3.70 percent in New Mexico. In the whole country the amount spent for education from *state and local sources* in 1950-51 was 2.27 percent of the average income of the people.

In whatever measure the provision of a relatively high percent of the cost of the public schools by the state governments (instead of leaving the whole burden to each local school district) is indicative of reasonable "effort" to maintain good schools, many of the states in greatest need have already made that effort.

Since a state's current expenditure per pupil is one indicator of the educational opportunities which it provides as compared with other states, the differences among the states which reach the ratio of about 4 to 1 for the extreme cases show that the opportunities which now exist are far from equal.

Other indications of the states' ability to support their public schools are the per-capita outstanding debts of the state governments and per-capita general state revenue from taxes. Already many states are heavily in debt for the many public services they must provide; in some cases their per-capita general revenue from taxes is about as high as the people's incomes can stand; other states can increase their revenue from taxes and allot larger amounts for the support of the public schools.

Another measure of the amount of support the states give public education is median expenditures per classroom. In general, those states with the largest numbers of children to educate and the smallest per-capita incomes with which to do it are the states which spend the smallest amounts per classroom, (includes teacher's salary, instructional equipment, and maintenance). The states with the smallest numbers of children to educate and the largest per-capita incomes spend the largest amounts per classroom unit; not only do they pay their teachers higher salaries, but they are able to provide a greater variety of instructional material. These differences increase the variations in educational opportunities among the states.

Federal Aid and the Problem of Control

The local school district is now seldom the relatively autonomous and self-contained unit it was a few decades ago. The state, and sometimes the county, gives it more fiscal support and increasingly influences its course. The federal government is fast becoming a greater influence in states and in local school districts. Many of these impacts of higher echelons of government are highly desirable—others may not be.

We are in an era of transition. These changes have often been dictated by necessity—and the programs and policies determined more by the expediency of the moment than by good long-range policy. It is only natural that this transition is producing some conflicts in jurisdiction, occasional feelings of competition between governmental echelons, and fears—some of them realized—of undue controls imposed by higher echelons.

We can probably agree that the closer governmental responsibility is to the people—as individuals—the more likely we are to gain and retain the essence of democracy. We can likewise agree that, as far as is possible, we must retain major initiative and responsibility for education in strong local school districts. Educational centralization in higher echelons of government is contrary to our tradition and to our concept of democracy. We want nothing of a situation in which a minister of education at federal or state level can look at his watch and say, "At this minute every third-grade child is studying the unit on Indians."

Why are higher echelons of government having a greater impact on local education? The answer is complex, but a few indications, of necessity oversimplified in their brevity, are:

1. *The local tax structure, dependent as it is almost entirely on the property tax, is out-*

moded as a major source of revenue for support of schools.

In an agrarian age common property and the improvements thereon were a fairly accurate index of income and wealth. Thus these were a good basis for a tax system. But we are not now in an agrarian age. Without being technical in the definition of "wealth," I would say it is probable that over this country the property listed on assessment rolls and thus subject to local taxation represents something less than 25 per cent of the wealth of the country.

In other words, if we depend entirely on the property tax to support education—or other functions of government—we ask 25 per cent or less of the wealth to support 100 per cent of costs. Something more than 75 per cent of the wealth is untaxed by such a plan!

Moreover, even this limited form of wealth spreads itself unevenly among areas in terms of needs for education. It is not unusual to find within the same state school districts that have an assessed valuation per child to be educated several thousand times greater than other districts have. In 1950 the state median of public school support derived from property taxes was 58.7 per cent.

2. *To correct these inequities the state has been drawn more and more into the picture as a source of revenue for local school districts.*

Only a large governmental unit can apply the income tax, which more equitably taps all forms of wealth, for if this type of tax is applied in the local district it "puts to flight the wealth which it strikes." Similarly, only in large governmental units can we apply a high revenue producing sales tax or an inheritance tax. Moreover, only a large governmental unit can equalize support for education by taxing wealth where it exists to provide schooling for children where they exist. Thus it is inevitable

[From Hollis P. Allen, "Here Is the Basic Answer to Federal Control," *Nation's Schools*, 47 (March 1951): 34-36. Reprinted by permission. Footnotes omitted.]

that the state be called upon to furnish a larger share of local educational revenues if we are to have justice in taxation and if we are to have equalization of educational opportunity.

3. The federal government also will be drawn into the picture more and more if we believe in an equitable taxation of wealth and in equalization of educational opportunity.

The federal tax system can tap certain forms of wealth that are difficult, if not impossible, to tax at state or local levels. We are all aware of the extensive variations in abilities of states to support education. In 1947, of our country's total tax dollar for all purposes approximately 75 cents was expended by the federal government, 14 cents by states, and 11 cents by local governmental units. At the same time of our country's tax dollar for public elementary and secondary schools, 1.3 cents was from the federal government, 39.8 cents from states, and 58.9 cents from counties and local school districts.

From the preceding paragraphs it is apparent that the facts do not support those who think of fiscal subsidies from higher levels of government for local governmental services as merely a sort of new deal grab bag to avoid local taxation.

4. The increasing tendency to make subsidies and grants from higher echelons of government for specific and specialized phases of education rather than for general purposes does, by its very nature, impose undue controls on lower echelons.

During the fiscal year of 1949 the federal government distributed some \$3,400,000,000 to the regular educational institutions of this country or to students therein. Virtually all of this tremendous sum was spent for education in highly specialized areas of the curriculum, for special groups of individuals, for special geographical areas, or for the promotion of some specialty of a department of government.

Many of these expenditures have set up subtle controls of education. The total research funds to colleges and universities increased from \$89,000,000 to \$160,000,000 between

1947 and 1949, all to promote the natural sciences. By totally neglecting research in the social sciences, education and humanities, the federal government has exerted a control on the emphases of these institutions. The school lunch program with its \$92,000,000 of federal money in 1949 exerted certain controls in local schools through types of nutrition programs for pupils and types of accounting systems to be maintained; it has also, in some states, tended to place state departments of education off-balance.

Local schools are influenced by the fact that virtually the entire federal interest in elementary and secondary school curriculum is in highly specialized phases only: citizenship education is the concern of the Department of Justice; aviation education, of the C.A.A.; school savings, of the Treasury Department, and vocational education, of the Office of Education. The promotion of *specialties only* by a higher echelon of government is *not* the way to obtain well balanced programs in lower echelons.

OUT OF BALANCE

What is the effect on states? In California more than half of the personnel in the state department of education is in the highly specialized areas for which federal assistance is given. New York State reports that its state department of education has one specialist in vocational agriculture (federally supported) for each 4000 students in this field of study, while it has one specialist in English (state supported) for each 1,000,000 English students. Similar facts could be brought out in almost every state. The state departments of education must serve equally all phases of education if we are to retain balance. The promotion of specialties by the federal government has made this balance impossible.

Of course, we need more vocational education, not less. But the long-range effect of promotion of specialties only by higher echelons is to exert a type of subtle control of purpose and administrative emphasis that may be inimical to the well-balanced over-all development of education in lower echelons. It

is also axiomatic that the greater the specificity, the greater the amount of control that must accompany the program. Controls once established on specialized programs are seldom relaxed, even though the need may be past.

As we extend further specialized programs from the state levels for support of handicapped children, for highly specialized curricular fields—transportation, school buildings, and a myriad of other specialized services and programs—is there danger that by promoting the specialty we exert undue controls on local school districts? Admittedly, the pressure groups demanding specialized programs are often stronger than those that have the general interests of education at heart. This has always been true at the federal level, and too often it is true at the state level.

Certain it is that the balanced program to meet needs of all pupils is jeopardized unless those who have the general interest of education at heart are more effectively heard in legislative halls. Our strength in education—and in democracy—is best served when the federal government and the states give primary consideration to the development of strong initiative and leadership in strong local school districts.

5. Lack of leadership, ability or responsibility at any echelon of government encourages undue impacts from higher echelons.

Lack of adequate leadership and responsibility in some state departments of education is given in Washington as the reason for undue controls in federal programs. Because certain state departments are weak, it is maintained that the cause of vocational education would be lost in these states if there were to be a relaxation of federal controls. Many of the abuses of federal programs in bypassing state departments of education, thus further weakening them, are justified by Washington because certain state departments are weak. This applies to activities of Lanham Act type, to the earlier conduct of the school lunch program (and a residue still remains), to plans and contracts for the education of Indian children, to the education of children on federal properties, and to several similar

programs. In the interests of federal uniformity these programs are designed with controls suitable for the weakest states.

AN OPEN INVITATION

Weak, small, untenable, unnecessary school districts must of necessity be unduly dependent upon county or state for many functions. In our nation-wide program of modernizing the local school district, those districts that complain loudest that they will lose local control have already lost that control when higher echelons of government make their budgets, either directly or indirectly employ their teachers, specify curriculum and method, and in other matters make decisions that the districts could make themselves if they became strong. There is great danger—already evident—that in the interests of uniformity these activities that of necessity must be extended to weak districts will be extended to other districts adequate to develop local initiative and responsibility.

And so we see that weakness or lack of responsiveness to a social need or lack of responsibility for education at any level of government is an open invitation for greater impact—and often control—by higher educational authority. The basic key to correction of these situations is strength in local school districts. We can easily develop a vicious circle; in fact, it is already developing. Weakness on lower levels means control by higher levels. Control by higher levels means less initiative and responsibility on lower levels, which in turn may easily lead to the need for still more controls by higher levels.

What to do about it? Whether we talk about the federal government, the state, or the county, *it is the major function of each higher echelon to strengthen lower echelons.* This must be reflected in changes in laws. But more important, it must be reflected in the attitude of those who administer in higher echelons, an attitude that service to and strengthening of lower echelons (particularly local school districts) is their primary purpose for being. We do not want higher echelons whose primary purpose is to build or

amass power for power's sake. For instance, it takes a brave and far-seeing state or county superintendent of schools to go all-out for strong local school districts when by doing so he may reduce the power of his own office. But at the same time he may enhance his leadership and reduce the trivia of his office.

Local superintendents of schools must get more firmly behind the movement for development of adequate and strong local school districts. Either scores of thousands of our school districts remain inadequate and we take the consequences of increasing county, state and federal control, or we develop a school district system that is strong and makes sense, thus avoiding further higher controls. If we select the first alternative our concept of democracy in schools as growing from the grass-roots of an adequate community is increasingly jeopardized. The second alternative is our only choice if we wish to avoid undue outside controls.

We must displace the piecemeal and specialized subsidies from higher echelons for support of education by general subsidies. This applies particularly at the federal level, although many states are increasingly subject to this principle. It is only by this means that we can avoid undue controls and gain a balanced educational administration and program.

The equalization factor must be more evident in increased general subsidies from higher echelons. The essential strength and responsibility at state and local levels cannot be engendered in less fiscally able units unless the resourcing is made available from federal or state government. It is only through more extensive taxation of sources available to states and the federal government that equity in tax support of education can be achieved, as pointed out earlier in this article.

The U.S. Office of Education must be reorganized to be the responsible federal educational agency. Of the \$3,400,000,000 of federal monies spent for education in 1949, only 1 per cent was spent for or through the Office of Education! It is the vast impact of federal noneducational agencies that dispense federal funds and programs to our schools that cause us most concern. If the rank and file of school men and women of the country only will believe that what happens on the federal level is of vital concern to them and their local school systems, something can be done about it. The present picture is partly the result of apathy on their part.

The state departments of education must be professionalized and enabled to exert a high type of educational leadership. It would belabor the point to discuss this further.

THE ROOTS OF DEMOCRACY

Educational administration programs and fiscal support at any level of government exist for one purpose—to enable children, youths and adults to become more effective individuals in more effective communities. The basic strength of this program must be in strong local communities. This must always be kept in mind even though the increasing impact of higher echelons of government on education is inevitable. The federal government, the state, and the county must support education and develop leadership and services to make each community more sufficient in serving the real and vital needs of the community and its citizens. These governmental units and the professional leadership in each must be a team to realize this high purpose. In our solution of the problems involved we shall get close to the roots of democracy.

Pressure Groups and Federal Aid

The current debate concerning the distribution of Federal funds to nonpublic schools as well as to public schools tends to exaggerate the religious issue and to obscure several other important issues on Federal aid to education. In general, the Catholics, through their National Catholic Welfare Conference; the Protestants, through their Federal Council of Churches; and the Jews, through their American Jewish Congress, have expressed effectively the views of organized religion on Federal aid. The views of other important organized interests, however, such as education, business, the Negro, labor, and the organized taxpayers have not received in the public press the attention that they deserve. From many points of view this is unfortunate since the issue of Federal aid to education engages the attention of many organized interests, the views of which must be considered, if the proposed legislation for Federal aid is to be written intelligently and appraised critically by the public.

The educational interests as represented by the National Education Association have supported proposals for Federal aid. They want Federal aid distributed to the states without Federal control and without discrimination as to race or creed. The public-school educators generally oppose the appropriation of Federal aid to nonpublic schools in principle, though some would approve the appropriation of Federal funds for limited services to nonpublic schools for health, audio-visual aids, and transportation, provided that state funds are used for the same purpose. Officially, however, the NEA has gone on record as favoring the distribution of Federal funds to public schools only. As the chief arguments for Federal aid the NEA has stressed the need for equalization of educational op-

portunity and raising of teachers' salaries to a level comparable to that of other professional workers of similar background and preparation.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States, as the principal spokesman for organized business on Federal aid to education, has consistently opposed such legislation. Its argument has been that the appropriation of Federal aid will lead to Federal control of education, open the door to possible socialization of the American economy, and promote an unbearable increase in the cost of government. As an alternative to Federal aid, the Chamber of Commerce recommends that state departments of education be strengthened and appropriations of state and local funds for education be increased. By these means, and probably with the aid of research services of the Federal government, local education can be improved without running the risk of Federal control or of unnecessarily increasing the expenses of the Federal government.

The outstanding spokesman for the interests of the Negro is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The principal interest of the NAACP in Federal aid is that the aid be distributed equitably in states maintaining separate schools for Negroes. Though the NAACP has centered its past efforts upon securing an equitable distribution of Federal aid to separate schools for minorities within a system of segregation, it has recently issued statements and brought lawsuits to challenge the constitutionality of segregation. At present its leadership seems divided on the question of the extent to which legislation for Federal aid to education should be used as an instrument in its fight against segregation. The NAACP's efforts to obtain

[From Charles J. Stanley, "Organized Interests and Federal Aid to Education," *School and Society*, 73 (Jan. 6, 1951): 1-4. Reprinted by permission of William W. Brickman, Editor, and Stanley Lehrer, Managing Editor.]

prohibitions against discrimination in the allotment of Federal funds in the states with separate school systems have brought charges of a desire for Federal control against the organization, but its leaders have countered with the statement that their demands are only for the enforcement of provisions presently incorporated in the Constitution of the United States.

Among the groups of organized labor the views of the American Federation of Labor are representative. Its primary concern is in the equalization of educational opportunity without regard to race or creed. The AFL has concentrated its attention upon increasing the salaries of teachers and changing the emphasis of legislation for Federal aid from that of a minimum foundation program for the poorer states to Federal support of the basic educational program of all the states. This latter program would entail the appropriation of much larger sums of Federal aid than are usually stipulated in this type of legislation. Most controversial of the demands of the AFL has been its support of legislation for the appropriation of Federal aid to non-public schools. Only in this way, the AFL contends, can the democratic right of each parent to educate his child in the school of his choice be maintained.

An important organized interest often overlooked in discussions of legislation on Federal aid is that of the organized taxpayers. As represented by the Friends of the Public Schools of America the organized taxpayers have consistently opposed legislation for Federal aid. They oppose Federal aid for several reasons: (1) Federal aid may lead to the nationalization of education; (2) Federal aid once granted would lead to demands for ever-increasing appropriations to education and other social-welfare services; (3) Federal aid would enhance the powers of certain teachers' organizations to encourage the dissemination of books and views which, if not un-American, are lacking in Americanism and are critical of American institutions. Other objections of the Friends of the Public Schools to Federal aid to education arise from their

belief that the schools are failing in the primary task of teaching the fundamentals. Their most common criticisms are that the schools are failing to teach pupils to read, write and express themselves accurately. The reason for this failure of the schools, as given by the Friends of the Public Schools, is that they are expending too much emphasis upon a "new social order," a "fundamental social change," or a "new democracy" to inculcate the necessary knowledge of the fundamentals of modern science, patriotism, and the Constitution. As an alternative to Federal aid, the Friends of the Public Schools advocate the continuance or retention of the present method of state and local support.

Attention may now be turned to points of significant agreement and disagreement among the organized interests on five major issues on Federal aid to education:

1. The most fundamental agreement is that state and local control of education be maintained.

2. On the question of economy or appropriations the range of opinion extends from that of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States which is opposed to Federal aid to education to that of the American Federation of Labor which advocates that the Federal government assume the major share of the responsibility for the support of education. Between these extremes lie the National Education Association, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the American Jewish Congress.

3. There is fundamental agreement on a "just and equitable" distribution of Federal funds in states which maintain separate schools for Negroes. Differences of opinion prevail concerning the elimination of state differentials in the support of Negro schools. Most insistent upon the elimination of discrimination are the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Jewish Congress. The National Education Association, the National Catholic

Welfare Conference, and the American Federation of Labor support the demand for the elimination of differentials on a gradual basis. On the question of segregation the opinion ranges from that of the demand of the NAACP for the total abolition of segregation, on the left, to the demands for the maintenance of the present status, on the right. The American Jewish Congress supports the demand for the abolition of segregation and the President's Commission on Higher Education has recommended it. The other organized interests have expressed few, if any, explicit opinions on this subject.

4. As is well known, the most fundamental disagreement among the organized interests currently centers around the question of Federal aid to nonpublic schools. The National Catholic Welfare Conference favors aid to nonpublic schools. The American Federation of Labor supports this demand. The Federal Council of Churches and the American Jewish Congress are opposed. The Supreme Court has rendered decisions which have tended to support the granting of certain types of public aid to nonpublic schools. Books and transportation are examples. The Advisory Committee on Education of 1938 recommended that certain types of services (health and welfare) be made available equally to pupils in public and nonpublic schools. At the present writing opinion in this area is so conflicting that a more definite statement cannot be made.

5. All organized interests recognize the worth of the schools and have made suggestions for their improvement. The Chamber of Commerce of the United States and the Friends of the Public Schools stress the necessity of inculcating in pupils a patriotic love of our nation and its political institutions. They feel, however, that the schools should give a more thorough grounding in reading,

writing, arithmetic, and American history. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has placed its main emphasis upon extending equal educational opportunities to pupils now deprived of them, especially to the children of the minority which it serves. It contends that the exclusively academic character of the curriculum should be de-emphasized and more attention given to studies that may function in the daily lives of pupils. The American Federation of Labor has expressed similar objectives of extending educational opportunities and of making them functional. The National Catholic Welfare Conference censures the public schools for their neutrality with respect to religion and morality. The National Education Association has endeavored to incorporate the essentials of the aims which the noneducational interests generally espouse, though oftentimes in so doing it has created a synthesis, especially in the social sciences, which has led the more conservative organizations to charge it with attempting to undermine pupils' confidence in American ideals of government.

From this survey of the positions of organized interests and Federal aid to education and of the issues arising from them two general concluding statements may be made: (1) The views of organized interests on Federal aid show conclusively that public opinion on Federal aid is not one but many and varied. (2) The study of the issues of (a) control, (b) appropriations, (c) separate schools for racial minorities, (d) public funds to nonpublic schools, and (e) the role of education in American democracy as they relate to the discussion of Federal aid to education shows that, in addition to opinion being divided among the organized interests, opinion on each of the major issues is divided and is undergoing a continuous change.

97 • Education and Organized Groups

In the preceding selections of this chapter we have noted that in contemporary society specialization inevitably leads to the formation of organized groups, and that these groups frequently concern themselves with educational questions. Teachers and administrators can take one of two positions in this situation: they can decry the existence of such groups and their interference with the public school, or they can recognize that these organized groups are a natural consequence of our socially complex age and that they must therefore work out ways of cooperating constructively with them to produce a better school system.

William O. Stanley, author of the first passage below, takes the second of these positions. If it is to learn to work with organized groups and at the same time safeguard the interests of the school, the profession needs a clear-cut theory of the relation which should hold between the groups and the schools. If the profession proceeds on an opportunistic basis without an adequate plan, it stands to lose as much as it gains. It must be recognized that organized groups have educational purposes and plans and that they exert an important educational influence both on their members and on the public. Hence, any cooperation between these groups and the schools will probably occur in the area of educational objectives—an area with which these groups are chiefly concerned and in which the profession is most in need of public cooperation.

Although Stanley discusses the significance of cooperation with organized groups, he does not develop a plan by which this cooperation might be effected. Such a plan is suggested in broad outlines by L. W. Kindred and W. P. Allen in the second passage, which is taken from a comprehensive work on public cooperation in the development of the schools entitled *Citizen Co-operation for Better Schools* and issued by the National Society for the Study of Education, one of the oldest and most dependable organizations of educational leaders in America.

The Importance of Cooperation with Organized Groups

Education, whatever else it may be, is at bottom not only a moral but a political undertaking. The foundations of government and of social philosophies, even in the most naked dictatorships, ultimately rest on the consent (active or passive) of a people; and, in the last analysis, that to which a people will yield their consent is determined by the nature of their education. It is true, of course, that the formal instruction of the school is but a fraction of the total education which molds the underlying aspirations, ideals, and

[From William O. Stanley, *Education and Social Integration*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953, pp. 9-17. Reprinted by permission. Some footnotes omitted.]

beliefs that inevitably shape the contours of public policy. Yet in a modern society, the school is so significant a part of the education of the citizen that it may be confidently asserted that no state is long secure nor will any social philosophy long endure where the vital, if not indeed the determinate, relations between public education and the social and political values of a people are ignored. Consequently, since each of these organized interest groups has developed a social philosophy and program which embodies, consciously or unconsciously, some theory of the public welfare, they have by virtue of that very fact also developed, implicitly at least, an *educational* philosophy and program. There is ample evidence that many of these groups have already become articulate with respect to their educational philosophies and programs, and it is a matter of common knowledge that almost all of them have attempted, in one way or another, to bend to their purposes both the underlying objectives of the public school and its specific program of instruction.

Educators, of course, have felt the weight of these pressures and they have not infrequently resented them. This resentment stems in part from the natural tendency of any group, charged with the performance of an important social function, to regard the demands of "lay" organizations, no matter how legitimate, as an unwarranted interference with their professional preserves. But only in part, for it must be admitted that the teacher is bound by the obligation of his office to guard as his first charge the educational interests of his students, and it must be admitted, also, that organized groups have at times insisted upon educational policies which the educator might reasonably doubt were wholly compatible with those interests. Organized associations have sought, frequently with considerable success, to limit the intellectual freedom of the schools wherever their particular interests were involved. On more than one occasion, powerful groups have even undertaken, again not without success, to dictate positively both the method and the content of teaching. Moreover, the representatives of certain property interests have

persistently attempted, especially during the depression years, to seriously circumscribe the financial support of the public school. Obviously, it is the duty of the educational profession to resist demands that threaten either the financial support or the intellectual integrity of the public school. Freedom to learn necessarily implies freedom of study and inquiry, and freedom to learn is an essential precondition of any genuine education. And while it is not always true that there is a perfect correlation between expenditure and educational achievement, yet it is patent that a good educational system is impossible without adequate financial support.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that educators have begun to concern themselves with the problem created by the pressures of organized interest groups, or that they should have conceived this problem primarily in terms of insulating the school from such pressures. Careful studies have been made analyzing in detail the educational activities of the more important interest groups in American society and graphically depicting their effect on the intellectual climate of the public school. Serious attention has been given to the organization of teachers and to the education of the public in order to safeguard the integrity of education and to protect freedom of teaching. But until very recently there has been little or no attempt to develop a considered theory of the relation which should exist between the aspirations and ideals of these interest groups and the philosophy and purposes of public education.

Despite the supreme importance of academic freedom for both students and teachers it is doubtful that a negative approach will enable the educator to penetrate to the heart of the problem posed for education by the demands of organized interests. For, as has been previously suggested, these organizations are more than pressure groups; they are the means through which large and significant sections of the American public express their needs and their experiences. It is one thing for the educational profession to insist that freedom of study and inquiry must be preserved and that the school must not be-

come a propaganda agency for any selfish or partial interest. But it is a quite different thing to assert that the ideals and aspirations of the major functional groups in American life have no significance for the ends and purposes of education, or that the accredited representatives of those groups have no legitimate role in the definition of educational objectives. Fundamentally, therefore, the problem must be conceived in positive terms; in its broadest sense it is ultimately that of the relation between the moral and intellectual purposes of education and the conflicting social ideals and aspirations represented by the welter of contending interest groups in American society. More narrowly, from the standpoint of the educational profession, it is that of the office of the profession in the formulation of the ends of education and of the moral and intellectual principles which should govern its action with respect to the claims of organized interest groups to participate in the shaping of educational policies. Admittedly these are difficult problems which will not be easily solved. But there are grave reasons why they can no longer be ignored with impunity.

Precisely because the school is highly significant in molding the attitudes, loyalties, and beliefs which set the limits of social and political action, the definition of the fundamental social ends of education will not be, and should not be, left to the exclusive determination of professional educators. No society will be, nor can any society afford to be, indifferent about the underlying and controlling conceptions which determine the education of its children. Hence, no group of educators, or even the profession as a whole, can define the social purposes of education or shape its policies apart from a consideration of the ideals and aspirations of the public, upon which education is dependent for support. It is possible to argue that a considerable degree of educational autonomy is possible and desirable in a democracy. But it must be an autonomy within a broad framework of purposes approved by the public; and the grant of autonomy itself, as well as the uses which are made of it, must rest on the consent of the public.

Apparently but two alternatives are open to the educational profession. It can either passively accept the purposes and policies imposed upon it by society or it can take the lead in guiding and shaping the public will with respect to education. Many educators have, in practice, chosen the first alternative, but there can be no doubt that the profession as a whole has increasingly accepted the responsibility for a more positive educational policy. In the furtherance of this policy, wise administrators have naturally sought the co-operation and support of the community—a trend which has been enormously strengthened in the last decade by the widespread interest in democratic administration in education and by the growing acceptance of the principle of the community school, both of which necessarily emphasize the participation of the community in the planning of every phase of school life.

Many educators, however, who have fully grasped the fact that educational policies ultimately rest on the consent of the public have made the fundamental mistake of regarding the public as a unit or rather, perhaps, of mistaking a part of it, usually the more favored economic part, for the whole. There doubtless have been societies in which public opinion was united on every point of basic significance; and there are, no doubt, questions upon which our own society speaks with a single voice. But such questions are not, in the literal sense, questions at all; typically they are taken for granted and are not even discussed, much less debated. The very fact that fundamental questions are raised concerning educational ends and policies confirms the judgment of both scholarly investigation and ordinary observation that on many points the public as such does not exist, but rather a number of partial publics each speaking from a somewhat different standpoint and with a somewhat different voice. As has been previously indicated, the ideals and aspirations of these partial publics are reflected in the social philosophies and programs of the major interest groups in American society; it is through these organizations that they speak, if they speak at all. Hence, community

participation in the shaping of educational policies means, in large measure, the participation of organized group interests.

Nor can it be said that many of them have no legitimate interest in education. For the work of the school touches, at a thousand points, the web of interests, purposes, beliefs, and practices represented by these groups. To educate is inevitably to build character; to build character is to shape the habits, attitudes, standards, and values upon which thought, judgment, and choice are predicated. Hence, neutrality is impossible; to teach at all is to support, in some measure, the ideals and beliefs which certain interest groups are seeking to promote, and to undermine, to some extent, the ideals and beliefs cherished by others. Obviously, therefore, every organized group has an interest in education since its fortunes and its aspirations are inescapably affected by the work of the school. To question the legitimacy of their interest in education is to question their right to exist; and, if the argument up to this point is sound, to question either their right to exist or their right to participate in the decisions which affect them is to deny to large sections of the American public any effective voice in the determination of public affairs.

Conversely, the educator must take note of the fact that these interest groups are themselves engaged in education; directly, as they shape the attitudes and opinions of their members and the public generally; indirectly, as they influence the development of public policy and of social institutions. Obviously, the educator cannot afford to overlook educational forces of such import in his formulation of educational policy.

Further, if the major interest groups in American society are a part of the community, then, in some measure, it is to these groups that the educator must address himself in order to win the consent upon which the program of the school must rest. Schoolmen have, of course, recognized this fact in practice, if not in principle. Indeed, it is by no means unusual to request particularly interested groups to participate directly in the work of the school. Business, farm, and labor

organizations, for example, have regularly cooperated in the development of vocational education courses, and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union has frequently assisted in the preparation of temperance material for school use. Curriculum reconstruction projects have increasingly incorporated, as an integral part of the project, lay advisory committees which almost always include in their membership representatives of some, if not all, of the more powerful associations and interest groups. Distinguished laymen, undoubtedly selected in part because they represented the viewpoint of important groups in American life, were appointed to serve on both the President's Advisory Committee on Education and the National Youth Commission. The National Education Association has for a number of years maintained joint committees with the American Legion and with the American Medical Association. National Education Week was for a number of years a cooperative enterprise sponsored by the American Legion, the American Bar Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the National Education Association. So, in fact, educators have been collaborating* with organized interest groups.

Moreover, many educators have recently displayed considerable interest in a closer alliance with organized interests. Curriculum experts have repeatedly urged that lay groups interested in promoting education should be invited to participate in the study of the problems of the community. The Educational Policies Commission, in several of its reports, has suggested "the desirability of closer mutual understanding between educators and other groups which ultimately must decide the nation's educational policies."¹ Near the close of an extended experiment at Teachers College, Columbia University, designed to bring together for mutual discussion influential laymen and students of education, the editors of the *Proceedings of the Congress on Education for Democracy* reported that during the course of the experiment "it became

¹ "The NEA and the NAM," *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 31:6 (1942).

building principals and teachers hesitate to develop new practices and procedures without definite assurance that the board of education and the superintendent are in favor of what they are trying to do. This assurance is provided when appropriate and clear-cut policy statements are adopted by the board and made known to members of the professional staff. This practice frees individual initiative and encourages principals and teachers to engage in activities for strengthening bonds between school and community.

Besides providing security and inviting progress, definite policies regarding citizen cooperation minimize the danger that individual school staff members may engage in unwise practices. Too often unwritten policies are misinterpreted and translated into actions which are detrimental to the school system and embarrassing to those in authority. This may occur in systems even when policies have been clearly defined and communicated to the staff, or when the staff has participated in their development. It is least likely to occur, however, when appropriate policy statements are available in written form and when a central clearing agency has been established so that representatives of building units may share their ideas and experiences and receive counsel from the general administrative staff.

Another important consideration is the extent to which the individual school is free to work with the public. Policies that call for a more or less uniform type of program throughout the system seldom achieve the best results. They do not permit flexibility for adapting a program to needs and conditions within the immediate school community. An individual school should have the right and encouragement to build its own program of school and community cooperation under policies that stimulate local initiative and action.

PREPARATION WITHIN THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL .

No school group should embark upon a co-operative program without thinking through the procedures which should be followed. De-

cisions must be made as to whether each teacher shall go his own way, how various projects should be coordinated, and whether guides should be developed. The experiences of schools that have successfully completed programs involving citizen cooperation offer some general suggestions that may well be considered.

The principals of these schools agree that it is best not to attempt to impose a program of cooperation upon the staff. They point out that teachers must understand the necessity and see the value of cooperative undertakings before much can be accomplished. Even after teachers begin to recognize this type of program as something in which they would like to participate, many will hesitate so long as it is apparent that a considerable burden will be added to their already overcrowded schedules.

The suggestion is underscored heavily that the individual school principal should move slowly with the staff in initiating cooperative projects. In a number of instances, the enthusiasm of beginners has resulted in a confusion of responsibility and the development of considerable ill-will. It is much better to try one thing at a time until enough experience has been gained for parents and other citizens to understand the role they are to play.

It should be the function of the administrative staff in each building to help create an atmosphere of relaxation and security for teachers who wish to engage in cooperative projects. Their freedom from tensions and pressures makes it possible to develop wholesome attitudes and to release creative powers that otherwise would be lost.

The professional staff of the school as well as other residents of the community must be conditioned to the acceptance of change. When administrators and teachers embark upon co-operative undertakings, they should stand ready to receive suggestions for modifying the school program. Unless they have open minds, there is danger that many suggestions will be taken as personal criticisms. Similarly, unless other citizens are genuinely interested in suggestions, teacher proposals for the improvement of home and community life may be resented. Not infrequently

parents accuse school staff members of being too idealistic and impractical.

As a final suggestion, school staff members and the parents of school children must recognize the need for evaluating their efforts. Systematic evaluation is essential to the development of procedures upon which effective cooperation can be established.

Organizing for Cooperative Action in Individual Schools

Since pupils, teachers, parents, and other citizens have a contribution to make in solving school and community problems, the question arises as to how their resources may be organized for cooperative action. The answer to this question is found in the understanding and observance of acceptable principles of group action in a democratic setting.

All who have worked with community groups know that it is important in the early stages of organization for someone to supply leadership and to help the group develop a sense of unity. It seems to be commonly expected that the principal or a teacher will supply the initial leadership, especially if the problem or project for consideration originated within the school. This may be all right in many situations if the arrangement is only temporary—merely to help get started. One goal in any cooperative undertaking should be to have leadership emerge from the group. This should occur naturally when it becomes apparent that some member possesses the necessary personal qualifications and specific understandings.

It should be recognized that leadership generally develops slowly. One condition is that the problems under study make sense to members of the group. Another is a feeling of friendliness and an atmosphere of easy communication. Moreover, people must have the

assurance that their opinions are wanted and that they will not be criticized and placed on the defensive for comments and remarks they make.

The group must know the limits within which it can function and make its own decisions. Nothing will dampen group enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose more quickly than the knowledge or suspicion that what is decided may be changed completely by someone else. Even if the group knows that it cannot go beyond making recommendations to the board of education, still the right to make those recommendations satisfies this condition. It is the combination of these elements which brings about the development of leadership and the solution of problems for the improvement of individual school programs.

Experience shows further that small cooperative groups enjoy greater success when formal organization is minimized. There is a strong likelihood that members will not participate as freely when they are required to comply with a set of procedural regulations. Often the regulations become a distraction and blot out the purposes for which the group is striving. The essence of good organization lies more in getting members to accept responsibilities in line with their interests, insights, and abilities.

As a group learns to work together, the members also learn that there is much more to cooperative action than expressing opinions and preparing a report. They discover that successful projects are the result of earnest inquiry and the careful observance of steps followed in problem-solving. Although the techniques used may vary from place to place, the need for defining a problem, collecting information, interpreting data, planning a course of action, and checking the outcomes remains fairly constant.

SUMMARY

The legal body through which the people control the school is the board of education, or, in the case of a few small communities, the town meeting, which passes on the school budget and other relevant matters. But this body operates within a vast system of social forces, many of which arise outside the community itself. Sometimes these

forces act upon the school board, but just as often they act directly upon the school administrators and the teachers. In other words, social influences that play upon the school are not always content to flow through the legal machinery of school control. Often, indeed, they attack the educational profession itself by accusing it of radicalism, faulty pedagogy, and lack of scholarship—to mention only a few of the charges regularly hurled at teachers. The fact that the profession as a group is criticized and attacked is in itself sufficient reason for teachers and administrators to assess the relevant social forces and to work out satisfactory policies and programs for dealing with them. This chapter has been prepared with this need in mind, and a brief summary should help the student to synthesize the main points and to see them as a whole in the broad social context in which the school operates.

1. The forces which now seek to control the school usually emanate from organized groups. With the progressive division of labor and the resulting specialization of points of view and interests, these groups have become large in number and extensive in operation. Since the education of the young frequently affects these groups in one way or another, the schools are of concern to them.

The motives of these groups vary: some are largely economic, some patriotic, some political, and some religious, to mention but a few. With respect to education, the groups tend to be concerned largely with the costs of education, the economic, political, and social points of view represented in the instructional program, the utility of the education, and the type of discipline and character development which it promotes.

2. Not all organized groups criticize the school for selfish purposes. Many of them—perhaps the great majority—believe that they are actually seeking to improve the school. And the purposes and plans of some of these groups do in fact tend to improve the educational system. In any event, the profession must share with the public the determination of educational purposes. Since these organized groups are the main avenues through which various elements of the public make themselves known and felt, teachers and administrators will do well to work out an adequate theory for cooperating with them in the development of educational purposes and programs. But the profession must understand, as it works with these groups, the domain of its own authority. It must know what it has a right to do—and, indeed, an obligation to stand for—by virtue of its commitment to the ideals of democracy and of its professional competence. If teachers and administrators do not become aware of these things, they will know neither where to yield nor where to stand firm as the cooperative enterprise proceeds.

3. There is also need for procedures and techniques for cooperating with organized groups. These procedures and techniques will vary from time to time and from community to community, but the fundamental requirements include a thorough understanding of the problem and of the various types of criticisms now made of the school and a willingness on the part of the profession to assume responsibility for working with various groups even when the problems are difficult and the likelihood of substantial progress seems remote.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. Distinguish between the authority the teacher derives from his expertness and that derived from the ideological tradition. In what sense is the teacher an expert? Name the different spheres in which he may claim expertness.

2. In what way have public tensions been created by the principle of the residual function of the school? Give examples of public tensions which may have arisen because the profession was following the residual principle. Do you see any adequate alternative principle for the schools to follow? What?

3. How do you account for the fact that the public is often disturbed about the social studies program of the school? If instruction in the social studies dealt only with matters of fact, would there be any cause for public concern about this part of the school program? Name some of the organized groups which may be concerned about the school's program in the social studies. Why would these groups be concerned?

4. What social values are at stake in the issue over federal support of the public schools? Which organized groups favor such support? Which ones oppose it? Account for the attitude of these groups.

5. Evaluate the argument that the teaching profession should learn to work with organized groups. What does the argument assume? Are these assumptions acceptable to you? Why?

1. The most fundamental treatment of the concept of authority as applied to educational relationships is the essay *A Concept of Authority*, by Kenneth D. Benne.

2. The way in which group interests and activities are related to the operation of the public schools is delineated in the classic study of this question entitled *Education and Organized Interests in America*, by R. Bruce Raup. A thorough reading of this book will give you a general picture of the competing group pressures that work upon the school and will point up the fundamental questions which the profession must face as it seeks to work out an educational program. A shorter and less penetrating analysis of the same question is to be found in Jesse Newlon's *Educational Administration as Social Policy*, pp. 1-77.

3. In the 1955 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, entitled *Forces Affecting American Education*, is a discussion of the groups that affect the schools as well as a number of other social forces which impinge upon the schools. See especially Chapters 1, 3, and 4 and Appendixes A and B.

4. The educational profession has been making substantial progress in the task of working out practical means of cooperating with citizens in building better schools. Some of these procedures, as well as their rationales, are presented by the National Society for the Study of Education in its *Fifty-third Yearbook*, Part I, "Citizen Co-operation for Better Public Schools." See especially Section II. See also *Practical Applications of Democratic Administration*, edited by Clyde M. Campbell, Part Two.

5. If you wish to know what can happen in a local situation when citizens are misled, read *This Happened in Pasadena*, by David Hulburd. This is the story of how a few citizens disrupted an entire school system.

Unless we are willing to follow a policy of drift, with its attendant suffering and conflict, a period of social transition such as we are now experiencing requires thoughtful and vigorous civic action. Such action on the part of citizens can take place only if they possess a high degree of intellectual and personal discipline in the study and examination of questions in which their own loyalties and aspirations are deeply involved. Although a few teachers have frequently attempted to develop this discipline, the present state of society calls for redoubled efforts along this line. The profession of teaching is thus being forced, by events as well as by accumulated knowledge about man and society, to reconsider and to revise both the theory and the practice of pedagogical method.

Methods of teaching designed to impart set rules and uncritical acceptance of conventional answers to the crucial social problems of today will do little to bring about the sort of personal and intellectual discipline needed in the present circumstances. These

methods will be unsuccessful partly because they provide no opportunity to learn the habits of clear thinking and partly because the very rules and answers they would stress are precisely those which have failed under the new social conditions created by science and technology.

It is because the old rules of conduct (in the economic, political, and other aspects of society) are no longer dependable that men are confused and uncertain in their attempt to deal with the important problems of today. Yet the teacher is faced with the fact that for many problems new rules and new answers have not been worked out, or else they have not become an accepted part of the cultural system. Thus, the teacher often has no answers to teach or—to put the same idea in another way—he has a welter of competing answers to the same question. Partly for this reason, the current tendency is to emphasize the pedagogical methods which promise to develop habits of effective thinking in the social sphere. For if ready-made answers can seldom be found, it is desirable to develop discipline in the intellectual and emotional habits by which appropriate solutions can be worked out and tested.

Yet it is precisely at this point that pedagogical methods become a matter of public concern. It is the nature of a social problem, as we shall see later, that it divides the community into two or more camps. Moreover, the teacher must deal with these problems in such a way as to encourage unfettered thinking and rigorous examination of prejudices and ideas. This means that no opinion found in the community is necessarily exempt from criticism. Once the shackles are removed from thought, there is no way of guaranteeing immunity to any idea whatever. Hence, the school can seldom deal with social problems without encountering opposition from some quarter of the community and thereby becoming involved, at least by implication, in social and political struggles. In short, the question of methods of teaching ceases to be merely a professional problem and becomes itself a matter of public concern.

DEMOCRATIC THEORY AND PEDAGOGICAL METHOD

There is another sense in which pedagogical method, like school administration, is a social phenomenon. It is not uncommon for teachers to believe that questions about teaching methods are answerable primarily by psychological knowledge. Facts and principles of psychology do furnish a part of the answer to questions about how to teach—but only a part. It is not difficult to recognize in a general way the kinds of questions about teaching that psychological investigation can help to answer. First of all, teaching is concerned with fostering effective processes of learning, and questions about the conditions and processes of learning are primarily psychological. Secondly, teachers often use social groups as a major medium of instruction, and questions about the learning and personality effects of various group structures and processes are questions of social psychology.

But these psychological concerns do not exhaust the important and relevant questions that serious consideration of teaching methods involves. Questions of why we are teaching lead us to study of the social environment into which the school is attempting

to induct youth. When we find, as we have found, that this social environment embraces at its core a democratic way of solving its problems, this finding implies certain requirements for teaching and learning. It implies that the methods of teaching employed be as democratic as possible and that the pupils themselves learn what the democratic method is and how to use it.

Hence, it is not surprising that there is a tendency to design methods of teaching which take account of the essential features of scientific method and democratic procedures as well as of sociopsychological facts. For some relevant questions about methods of teaching can be answered only by knowledge about the conditions and ideology of the society in which the teaching is carried on. Methods of teaching as well as procedures and techniques of social control in the classroom will always reflect in some measure the intellectual methods and patterns of social control prevalent in the culture. The patterns of thinking described as the scientific method are the most highly prized modes of thinking in our society. Moreover, it is generally maintained that the democratic method of resolving social problems is the scientific method translated into social procedures and techniques.

In this chapter, we are concerned primarily with the social and logical requirements of teaching rather than with the psychological requirements, though the latter will be considered at points where they are particularly relevant. More specifically, we shall deal with the following questions:

1. What is a social problem and how does it differ from other sorts of problems?
2. What does one learn from the proper study of social problems?
3. What social conditions in the classroom are conducive to learning?
4. What principles of intellectual method are important in teaching?
5. What are some examples of the better classroom methods of problem solving?

It is often believed that a social problem is the same as any other problem except that it arises in one or another of the social sciences rather than in the physical or biological sciences. But this is an erroneous view. A social problem, in the final analysis, involves the character of individuals and the norms of the local community and of society in general in ways that other problems do not. This distinction is brought out in the two parts of Selection 98, by Smith and by Raup and his colleagues, respectively. The factual and value content of social problems discussed in Selection 98 is explored more thoroughly in the pair of readings comprising Selection 99. The first of these, by two distinguished logicians, the late Professor Morris R. Cohen and Ernest Nagel, deals with the various senses in which we use the term "fact." The second, by Myrdal, sets forth the distinction between facts and valuations as these bear upon human choice and conduct. Selection 100, by Stanley, rounds out the discussion of the nature of social problems by delineating the kind of discipline that can be developed through rigorous study of social problems.

Teachers are concerned not only with the psychological effectiveness of the methods they use to stimulate and guide their pupils. They are concerned also with the canons by which the information and the ideas taught are judged to be logically valid and empirically sound. They are concerned, too, that the values used as criteria of judgment be justifiable. And they are concerned no less with the social relations that exist in the classroom. The next three selections deal with the social, the psychological, and the logical factors that should be taken into account if learning is to be promoted effectively. In Selection 101, by Goodson, we find a discussion of the kinds of relationships that should hold between pupils and teachers and among the pupils themselves. Selection 102, by Ferrell, stresses certain procedures based upon the principles of logic, whereas Selection 103, by Wilhelms, emphasizes procedures derived both from psychological principles and from the canons of scientific method.

In the group of selections comprising Reading 104 we find three examples of teaching methods taken from classroom practice. The first two illustrate ways of dealing with factual problems in which social norms and personal prejudices are not directly involved. The third illustrates how a genuine social problem, entailing certain social prejudices, was handled in the classroom.

98 • *The Nature of a Social Problem*

Members of our society confront a variety of complex and baffling social problems. If the schools have a responsibility of helping citizens learn how to solve these problems, some major part of school instruction must be focused upon the study of contemporary issues. These problems must be studied, furthermore, in such a way as to shed light upon the specific problems studied and to help students acquire skill in methods that can be applied to other social problems, without as well as within the context of school.

In saying that schools should devote time to the study of "social problems," we must know what we mean by a social problem. Among the significant characteristics of a social problem is the fact that it involves conflict over the purposes as well as over the means of action. Moreover, the conflicts that lie at the heart of our major contemporary social problems usually entail inconsistent and sometimes incompatible group outlooks and interests. People generally assume that their own point of view is the only sensible one and that those who do not share it are unreasonable, dishonest, or even incomprehensible. Yet the interdependence of the modern world is forcing all of us to come to terms with conflicting perspectives generated by differences in occupation, class and caste, religious beliefs, and national cultures.

In the first part of the following selection, B. Othanel Smith develops a definition of a social problem, giving particular attention to its human aspects. In the second part,

R. Bruce Raup, George E. Axtelle, Kenneth Benne, and B. Othanel Smith—authors of a work dealing with the methodology of resolving problems involving conflicts of value, interest, and perspectives—emphasize the deep-cutting character of the conflicts that contemporary social problems present. From this selection we should derive a clearer understanding not only of the nature of social problems but also of some of the major difficulties that must be faced in learning to deal with them intelligently and peacefully.

Conflicting Purposes in Social Problems

All of us know what a problem is. It is the thing that has bothered us all of our lives. We want something which in educational parlance we call a goal or an objective. If we can get what we want, if we can attain the goal, there is no problem. We simply go ahead and satisfy our desire. Frequently the attainment of our goal is not so easy as that; something stands between us and the thing we want. We say that in order to get what we want this obstacle must be overcome. When we have located the obstacle and decided that we shall attempt to remove it from our path, or to overcome it otherwise, we have defined a problem.

The obstacles which get in our way are of two kinds: material and human. An individual wishes to be in a nearby city at a certain time. The distance separating him from the city must be overcome within the time limit. This can be done by choosing and procuring a means of transportation suitable to the requirements. If he chooses an automobile and arrives at his destination on time, the problem is solved. In this case the obstacle is largely material and the means of overcoming it primarily involves material things. . . .

Human barriers can also prevent the realization of our desires. If we wish better health facilities, for example, it is not merely physical barriers that lie in our path and prevent the attainment of our goal. The United States Public Health Service has estimated that 400

million man-days are lost annually through disabilities. This amounts to a financial loss of 10 billion dollars worth of goods and services. In 1940, 50 times as much production was lost from the illness of workers as from labor strikes. Why this loss? Is it due to lack of medical knowledge? Is it because of lack of knowledge of how to reduce accidents and unhealthy living conditions? Is it because of lack of human and natural resources that America is short of hospital facilities, physicians, and nurses? No, these are not the points of difficulty. We have all of these requirements in abundance. The real trouble lies in the fact that every move in the direction of extending medical service to all people is beset by all sorts of conflicting views as to what is desirable, and to some extent by inconsistent notions of what is possible and what is necessary with respect to the health of the people. The plain fact is that we do not have adequate health facilities simply because of human barriers in the form of social perspectives, beliefs as to what is of most worth, and the like. We are up against other people who want different things or who want better health facilities only if they do not have to yield certain other things in getting them.

At the level of verbal abstraction where choice among the things we value does not have to be made, everyone wants good health and adequate health services for everybody. In this rarefied air of abstraction no one

[From R. Othanel Smith, "What Is a Social Problem?" *Progressive Education*, 26 (April 1940): 165-167. Reprinted by permission of the authors and *Progressive Education*.]

wants the other fellow to be sick. But when we come down to the level of social reality, health is put over against other wants. Then we discover that some of us prefer that our fellowman be sick rather than that these other wants be denied. It is this fact that led the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt to call some persons "yes, but . . . people." They want good health for everyone, but. . . . If adequate health service means higher taxes for some individuals; if it means loss of control by the medical profession of the number of individuals preparing to be physicians; if it means that the government will have a hand in establishing and maintaining health insurance, to mention only a few of the "ifs," then many individuals will stand in the way of the development of these services. These individuals become obstacles in the path to better health. Finding some way of overcoming or circumventing the resistance of these individuals constitutes the social problem. Of course, all of us are yes, but . . . persons most of the time. If this were not so, our social problems would be few in number and confined more or less to technical questions. . . .

Another way of putting the matter is to say that a social problem almost always centers in differences of opinion about the ends to be achieved. It is frequently said that in America we are all in agreement upon basic objectives and that our disagreements and conflicts are about the means of achieving these objectives. But this is an erroneous view. The people of this country of course agree upon objectives in the abstract. However, when they come down to the level of social reality where not all of their wants can be satisfied and where many of them are incompatible, they must choose among these wants. Then divisions of opinion about the worth of various ends arise. At this point disagreements are not merely about the means of reaching goals agreed upon, as is frequently supposed. In addition, and perhaps more basically, the disagreements are about the ends themselves.

At the level of reality differing general notions of what should be done will appear among individuals and groups. One person or social group, for example, may hold that

the health of the individual should be the responsibility primarily of the individual and his family. Other persons or groups may believe that the responsibility for the individual's health should be borne largely by the public through some form of collective health program. Physicians may hold one view, laborers another, farmers still another, and so on. There will be differing and competing generalized notions concerning what *should* be done about public health, each with its advocates, each with its arguments, each claiming to serve certain goods, each trying to prevail, by one method or another, over the other. A situation in which such clashing and competing principles occur is a problem situation, and the clash of principles defines a problem for those who must conduct themselves according to one principle or another in that situation. This kind of problem we speak of as an issue. . . .

It follows from what has been said that social problems are further characterized by the fact that they involve the personality structures of individuals. Some persons become so structured that in a given set of circumstances they want *A* more than they want *B*, *C*, or *D*. Whereas the structure of other persons makes them prefer *D* to *A*, *B*, or *C*. Every individual has his own preferences and the relations among them become evident only in some concrete situation in which he must choose among competing wants. These relations will vary from situation to situation, so that in one set of circumstances an individual will prefer food to other things, and in another he will prefer the advice of a physician. Everyone has some sort of loose hierarchy of wants so that he will forego some things with less resistance than others. For example, an individual may forego the seeing of a moving picture or even a vacation with little or no protest, but circumstances must become very serious before an individual will surrender his life in return for other values.

Furthermore, the structure of persons always develops and operates within a broader structure called a social group. Without social groups the individual would acquire nothing

more than the rudiments of personal structure, if indeed that would be possible.

His behavior is always shaped not only by his personal structure but also by the structure and dynamics of the group or groups to which he belongs. A worker in a coal mine, a teacher, a physician, and an industrialist will tend to think differently about the same event, not only because they have different

personal structures, but also because they operate against backgrounds of varying group demands and expectations. It is now possible to give a broader definition of a social problem. When the difficulty to be overcome is one which involves differences between social groups, as well as individuals, about what is desirable in a particular circumstance, the problem is a social one.

Levels of Difficulty in the Study of Social Problems

The most crucial practical problems stem from confusion and conflict in social perspectives. It can hardly be overemphasized that the fundamental social problems of today are found in the realm of interpersonal and intergroup conflicts. We do not have depressions, mass unemployment, substandard living conditions, and great inequalities of educational opportunity (to mention only a few of the shortcomings of our current social arrangements) because we lack the technological knowledge and skill, the material resources, and the manpower required for the progressive reconstruction of the material and cultural conditions of American life. Why, then, do we not proceed with the required reconstruction? The answer to this question is to be found in the lack of common social sanctions for the use of these resources for agreed-upon social ends. What is needed, therefore, is a frank recognition that social action is caught up in the struggle of competing groups to shape the world in the light of their competing perspectives. Our own conflicting beliefs and dispositions stand in the way of constructive social action as they shape up into competing ways of molding the world to their patterns. The methodological task is that of ascertaining a more adequate method of resolving these conflicts into a common social outlook.

Failure to recognize the foregoing differ-

ences in situations and the corresponding differences in problems accounts in no small measure for the fact that each party in a social conflict often explains the refusal of the opposition to come to its terms, or to an agreement, by pointing to the opposition's ignorance of facts, its stubbornness, its selfishness, or its moral degeneracy. The sincerity of the opposition then becomes so much in doubt that deliberation breaks down and some form of coercion supplants it as a means of establishing a course of action. An awareness of the part played by social perspectives in shaping the intellectual and moral position of a person or social group is, of course, not sufficient for the resolution of situations of social conflict, but it would go a long way in promoting tolerance, in focusing thought upon the major contemporary sources of intellectual confusion, and in keeping the channels of social communication open.

Kinds of Practical Situations with Respect to Community Orientation

Stated somewhat formally, there are three kinds of situations in which judgments of practice occur. With respect to any situation one of the following conditions always prevails: (1) there is a common perspective, and little or no difference of opinion exists as to what the situation is; (2) there is a common perspective, but it is found in deep-lying con-

ceptions and interests, while the more immediate outlook is confused and highly controversial; and (3) there are two or more competing perspectives, but there may be elements upon which some agreement may exist and from which the construction of a common perspective may begin.

*Situations with a Stable and Clear
Common Orientation*

Judgments of practice in the first kind of situation will be largely concerned with means and conditions, for different participants will be more or less in agreement upon what is desired and desirable, and their judgments will have regard to the most effective means of fulfilling the common desire, though a consideration of these ends will be implied in the clarification and choice of means. The judges will have the same fundamental social orientation, and the situation will appear essentially the same to each one. Thus, for example, if a group of teachers is selecting a textbook for use in the teaching of history and are explicitly in agreement upon the purposes of such a course and upon the theory of the educative process, their chief concern will be with questions that have to do with the merits and demerits of the various books in the light of the desired ends. As the qualities of the books are discussed, the purposes of instruction in history will no doubt be sharpened and clarified. But as long as the general perspective within which the situation is set remains unchallenged and unchanged, no fundamental reconstruction of purposes will be required, and the major concern of the teachers will be about the various qualities of the books as seen in the light of the accepted perspective. To put the point in another way, there is no conflict of perspectives in the situation, and hence the outlooks of the persons involved will require or receive no fundamental reconstruction as a result of the process of choosing a textbook. It is therefore possible for judgment under such conditions to be more or less preoccupied with the "objective" aspects of the situation. The community of persuasion is so well established that it has settled below the threshold of con-

troversy and from that point of vantage works effectively to shape a not unwilling situation to its pattern.

*Situations Where the
Common Orientation
Is Obscure or Forgotten*

In the second type of situation the common perspective is there and, as in the first case, is below the threshold of controversy; but, unlike the first case, the immediate beliefs and value-ends are confused and conflicting. Moreover, this common social orientation has been so long there and so long neglected because of preoccupation with surface affairs that it takes special effort or even a shock to reestablish an effective working relation between it and this confusion of affairs. The disagreements as to what is desirable are relatively superficial; they are not credal differences. To refer to the illustration of the selection of a textbook in history, it may be that at the outset some of the teachers will have one idea about the appropriate qualities of a book and some another idea because they have given no serious thought to the ideas and values operating in their teaching. Let us assume that, as they explore the situation, they uncover their hidden assumptions as to the purposes of instruction and the nature of the educative process and find themselves fundamentally in agreement. Their superficial differences over which they were in conflict at the outset now fade away, and they proceed with the task at hand. An illustration involving the pressure of immediate action is found in instances of national emergency. In a time of national emergency men who potentially hold a common social orientation, by which is meant a set of cultural presuppositions such as the idea of freedom, of equality, and of the integrity and worth of the person, will for the most part put aside their more or less superficial differences such as those indicated by party alignments (when the parties adhere to similar creeds) and establish a united front. Here we have a case of circumstances forcing a return to a common perspective which in normal times is forgotten. Disagreement as to the best means to employ in meeting the



pressing necessity may arise, but it constitutes a problem within the accepted frame of pre-suppositions. But we, of course, need not and should not always depend upon emergency circumstances to coerce a recognition of our hidden common outlooks. For when we begin to delve behind our differences, as in the example of textbook selection, to look for common assumptions in search for a meeting of minds, we are doing perhaps more carefully the kind of thing which emergency circumstances sometimes coerce us into doing. The task is to uncover our common orientation and consciously to use it in arriving at morally acceptable decisions and in formulating normatively justified policies. In such cases, little or no reconstruction of perspectives will take place.

Situations Where No

Common Orientation Exists

In turning to the third kind of situation, we come to the one with which we as a people are painfully and primarily concerned today. It is a situation in which the chief characteristic is the absence of a community outlook and a consequent confusion and conflict of perspectives. It calls for the creation of a community orientation, not merely for the recovery of an orientation sunk beneath the threshold of awareness. Nor does it call for the reconstruction of isolated normative principles but rather for the rebuilding of a whole cluster of interdependent norms.

Modern society, as we have observed, is characterized by a multiplicity of perspectives arising out of specialization, social differentiation, and occupational and social mobility. These perspectives give rise to conflicting trends of thought which struggle against one another for control of the present and the emerging future. The irresolution of the sort of situations now under discussion is, therefore, to be found in the context of these con-

flicting trends of thought and their respective orientations. If we are confused in such situations, it is because we do not recognize clearly the various trends of thought operating in them or, when we do recognize these trends, we are unable to anticipate the outcome of the struggle among them. Consider, for example, two groups of teachers: one is devoted to the teaching of specialized subjects and the other is equally devoted to the development of an integrated program of instruction. Here we find two conflicting trends of thought arising from and supported by simultaneous and competing perspectives. Both groups recognize the importance of subject matter, but they differ as to its meaning. The initiation and function of interest will be seen differently from the perspective of each group. The first group will tend to emphasize the acquisition of knowledge and skill. The second group, while not neglectful of these, will stress the importance of a sense of social values and of the function of these values in thought and conduct. Now the curricular problem at this level of deliberative analysis is not to be formulated in terms of "externally" existential conditions. It does not exist as perplexities to be overcome in the selection and organization of materials of instruction. On the contrary, the problem lies within the area of interpersonal and intergroup conflicts. The definition of this problem is possible only as the judges seek to locate the different expectations, purposes, and trends of thought as manifestations of a broader and more pervasive orientation. As this is done, it becomes possible to note the points of conflict between the currently competing perspectives. And these points of conflict constitute the difficulties to be overcome in the process of deliberation. The creation of a new and common outlook through the reconstruction and reeducation of the judges, is required to remove the perspectival conflicts.

99 • Two Dimensions in the Study of Social Problems: Fact and Value

We would all probably agree that, whatever else problem-solving requires, it requires *facts* on which to ground the solutions that people concerned with the problem work out and accept. But we would probably find less agreement on just what "facts" are. Sometimes we confuse "facts" with what we happen to believe. Our customary beliefs are so clear and satisfying to us that we take them as "facts," but we discover, as we deal with problems, that other people do not accept our "facts" but bring forward other, conflicting items of belief as "factually self-evident." If we are going to depend upon "facts" to settle our differences, we obviously require a clear notion of what we are talking about and what such "facts" are.

In addition to factual knowledge, value judgments are involved in social problems. Here, again, people often confuse what they *know* with what they *like* or *dislike*. Part of the sophistication required to clarify and solve a social problem involves the ability objectively to sort out our valuations from what we know and to clarify the common and conflicting valuations that are part of the problem to be solved.

The reading which follows is divided into two parts. First, Morris R. Cohen and Ernest Nagel, in an excerpt from what is perhaps the best-known textbook in logic, undertake to clarify the idea of a "fact." Then Gunnar Myrdal, whose *An American Dilemma* is considered a definitive work on our value conflicts, tries to make clear the important distinction between "factual knowledge" and "valuation" (Myrdal's term for value judgments).

What Is a Fact?

We must, obviously, distinguish between the different senses of "fact." It denotes at least four distinct things.

1. We sometimes mean by "facts" certain discriminated elements in sense perception. What is denoted by the expressions "This band of color lies between those two bands," "The end of this pointer coincides with that mark on the scale," is facts in this sense. But we must note that no inquiry *begins* with facts so defined. Such sensory elements are

analytically sought out by us, for the purpose of finding reliable signs which will enable us to test the inferences we make. All observation appeals ultimately to certain *isolable* elements in sense experience. We search for such elements because concerning them universal agreement among all people is obtainable.

2. "Fact" sometimes denotes the propositions which *interpret* what is given to us in sense experience. *This is a mirror, That sound is the dinner bell, This piece of gold is mal-*

[From Morris R. Cohen and Ernest Nagel, *An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method*, copyright 1934 by Harcourt, Brace and Co., pp. 217-219. Reprinted by permission.]

leable, are facts in this sense. All inquiry must take for granted a host of propositions of this sort, although we may be led to reject some of them as false as the inquiry progresses.

3. "Fact" also denotes propositions which truly assert an invariable sequence or conjunction of characters. *All gold is malleable, Water solidifies at zero degree Centigrade, Opium is a soporific* are facts in this sense, while *Woman is fickle* is not a fact, or at least is a disputed fact. What is *believed* to be a fact in this (or even in the second) sense depends clearly upon the evidence we have been able to accumulate; ultimately, upon facts in the first sense noted, together with certain assumed universal connections between them. Hence, whether a proposition shall be called a fact or a hypothesis depends upon the state of our evidence. The proposition *The earth is round* at one time had no known evidence in its favor; later, it was employed as a hypothesis to *order* a host of directly observable events; it is now regarded as a fact because to doubt it would be to throw into confusion other portions of our knowledge.

4. Finally, "fact" denotes those things existing in space or time, together with the relations between them, in virtue of which a proposition is true. Facts in this sense are

neither true nor false, they simply *are*: they can be apprehended by us in part through the senses; they may have a career in time, may push each other, destroy each other, grow, disappear; or they may be untouched by change. Facts in this fourth sense are distinct from the hypotheses we make about them. A hypothesis is true, and is a fact in the second or third sense, when it does state *what* the fact in this fourth sense is.

Consequently, the distinction between fact and hypothesis is never sharp when by "fact" is understood a proposition which may indeed be true, but for which the evidence can never be complete. It is the function of a hypothesis to *reach* the facts in our fourth sense. However, at any stage of our knowledge this function is only partially fulfilled. Nevertheless, as Joseph Priestley remarked: "Very lame and imperfect theories are sufficient to suggest useful experiments which serve to correct those theories, and give birth to others more perfect. These, then, occasion further experiments, which bring us still nearer to the truth; and in this method of *approximation*, we must be content to proceed, and we ought to think ourselves happy, if, in this slow method, we make any real progress."¹

¹ *The History . . . of Discoveries relating to Vision, Light, and Colours*, 1772, p. 181.

Beliefs and Value Choices

People have ideas about how reality actually is, or was, and they have ideas about how it ought to be, or ought to have been. The former we call "*beliefs*." The latter we call "*valuations*." A person's beliefs, that is, his knowledge, can be objectively judged to be true or false and more or less complete. His valuations—that a social situation or relation is, or was, "just," "right," "fair," "desirable," or the opposite, in some degree of intensity or other—cannot be judged by such objective stand-

ards as science provides. In their "*opinions*" people express both their beliefs and their valuations. Usually people do not distinguish between what they think they know and what they like or dislike.

There is a close psychological interrelation between the two types of ideas. In our civilization people want to be rational and objective in their beliefs. We have faith in science and are, in principle, prepared to change our beliefs according to its results. People also want

to have "reasons" for the valuations they hold, and they usually express only those valuations for which they think they have "reasons." To serve as opinions, specific valuations are selected, are formulated in words and are motivated by acceptable "reasons." With the help of certain beliefs about reality, valuations are posited as parts of a general value order from which they are taken to be logical inferences. This value hierarchy has a simple or elaborate architecture, depending mainly upon the cultural level of a person. But independently of this, most persons want to present to their fellows—and to themselves—a trimmed and polished sphere of valuations, where honesty, logic, and consistency rule. For reasons which we shall discuss, most people's advertised opinions are, however, actually illogical and contain conflicting valuations bridged by skewed beliefs about social reality. In addition, they indicate very inadequately the behavior which can be expected, and they usually misrepresent its actual motivation.

The basic difficulty in the attempt to pre-

sent a logical order of valuations is, of course, that those valuations actually are conflicting. When studying the way in which the valuations clash, and the personal and social results brought about by the conflicts, we shall, moreover, have to observe that the valuations simply cannot be treated as if they existed on the same plane. They refer to different levels of the moral personality. The moral precepts contained in the respective valuations correspond to different degrees of generality of moral judgment. Some valuations concern human beings in general; others concern Negroes or women or foreigners; still others concern a particular group of Negroes or an individual Negro. Some valuations have general and eternal validity; others have validity only for certain situations. In the Western culture people assume, as an abstract proposition, that the more general and timeless valuations are morally higher. We can, therefore, see that the motivation of valuations, already referred to, generally follows the pattern of trying to present the more specific valuations as inferences from the more general.

100 • Types of Learning Involved in the Study of Social Problems

We have already noted that points of view, attitudes, facts, beliefs, and valuations are all part of the content of a social problem. Presumably, students engaged in problem-solving must learn how to deal intelligently and objectively with all of these. Teachers still tend to measure the effectiveness of their instruction primarily in terms of the facts and principles that their students acquire and the intellectual skills that they develop. But learning outcomes other than these are to be expected from the solving of social problems. What is the range of learning outcomes of which teachers should be aware as they work with students in studying social problems and as they attempt to evaluate the results of instruction? In the following selection, William O. Stanley attempts to answer this question.

In order to discover the types of learning products embedded in an educational program built around the study of social prob-

lems, it is first necessary to examine briefly the meaning of a social problem. Without making any claim that the definition offered is

exhaustive, it may be said that any adequate definition of a social problem must include the following components:

1. A social problem always arises in some specific social context which sets the general conditions under which the problem must be solved and which supplies the resources and means available for its resolution. There is no greater error in the study of social problems and issues than to consider them in the abstract, without reference to the historical and cultural circumstances under which they occur. Cultural beliefs, attitudes and arrangements are, of course, not immutable; and the successful solution of social problems typically requires some reconstruction of the social context. But the real meaning of a social problem is never perceived until it is related to the history, beliefs, attitudes and institutional arrangements of the society in which the problem has emerged.

2. A social problem always involves a felt difficulty. The heart of a social problem is not a topic or a body of material but an issue, both in the sense of controversy and in the sense of outcome. It is important to note that there are at least two aspects of this characteristic of a social problem. It is, in the first place problematic in that it involves some objective difficulty, some unresolved social situation that must be dealt with before the problem is solved. There is at hand, moreover,—at least in so far as the persons working on the problem are concerned—no ready made way of removing the difficulty. Consequently, it is necessary to explore the situation and to contrive some way of acting which will solve the problem. And, in the second place, a problem is a problem only for those who feel or sense the difficulty. Hence persons, as well as objective conditions, are constituent elements in the definition of a social problem.

3. A social problem typically embodies conflicting sets of proposals for the removal of the difficulty and, in some instances, conflicting conceptions of the nature of the difficulty itself. Behind this conflict lies a deeper con-

flict: the conflict of interest,¹ value and perspective growing out of the way in which different persons and groups are situated with respect to the situation at issue. All of these elements, therefore, must be included, along with conflicting proposals for the removal of the difficulty, in any adequate definition of a social problem.

4. Finally a social problem always involves a power field. It involves a power field, in the first place, because one source of the difficulty in any social problem can usually be found in some conflict over the distribution of power in the social situation in question. And it involves a power field, in the second place, because the resolution of a problematic situation demands the possession or the acquisition of the means required to remove the difficulty. . . .

It is now possible to see with some degree of accuracy the different kinds of learning products which are required if the study of social problems in the public school is to lead to an increased capacity to comprehend and deal with the crucial social problems confronting our society. Without, again, making any claim that the categories presented are exhaustive it may be noted that at least four different kinds of learning products are involved: memorial mastery of information, principles and

¹ An interest, of course, is centrally defined as a genuine concern of some individual or group. A value, on the other hand, while it is rooted in interest, includes an appraisal as well as a prizing. The interest, in question has been examined, analyzed, criticized, and it has been judged to be good. As a good, moreover, it ought to be prized by all. A value, therefore, possesses both a universal reference and a judgmental character not implied by the term interest. A perspective connotes a point of view, a way of perceiving the problem. It embraces, of course, interests and values but it admits, also, factual or descriptive judgments, both as to the way things are, and as to the ways in which they can best be controlled or changed. Perspectives, moreover, are frequently crystallized into more or less systematic and consistent bodies of social theory.

verbal passages; skills; understandings; and attitudes. Each of these categories, with the possible exception of the first, requires further dissection if it is to be useful in the analysis of the content and methods needed in the study of social problems.

1. Memoriter mastery, of course, does not occupy a central place in the study of social problems. Nevertheless, there are times when the memorization of certain formulas or bodies of information may be advantageous in the processes of thought and deliberation. Since it is a distinct type of learning product, memoriter mastery should be noted.

2. Three distinct types of skills may be recognized: those pertaining to the manipulation of material objects and tools, those pertaining to the establishment of adequate working relationships with other persons and groups, and those pertaining to the control and management of ideas. Among the latter is to be found the effective use of abstract symbols in receiving and communicating meaning. But the language arts—verbal, mathematical and graphic—do not exhaust the list of intellectual skills. Here are to be found, also, such skills as:

a. the ability to discover the assumptions on which an argument is based;

b. the capacity to determine whether or not a given conclusion follows from a particular set of premises;

c. the power to analyze a sample from the standpoint of its adequacy to sustain a generalization drawn from it;

d. an understanding of the nature of evidence and of proof, coupled with the ability to apply the rules of evidence and of proof, both in the construction of valid arguments and in the evaluation of the arguments of others; and

e. the capacity to discover and relate pertinent facts to a hypothesis so as to test its validity.

Obviously these intellectual skills, in any particular inquiry, cannot be divorced from an understanding of the ideas and a knowledge of the facts involved; and, obviously, too, the facility with which they are learned is related, in some degree, to the native capacity of the learner. But they are not original en-

dowments nor are they identical with the understanding of ideas and the knowledge of facts. Hence like any skill they must and can be learned in some measure. As in the case of other skills, the mastery of intellectual skills, save in exceptional cases, is not insured by incidental learning. There are sound psychological and pedagogical reasons for beginning instruction in the intellectual skills in connection with their use in the solution of problems arising in the experience of the learner. But such instruction should be specific and direct with ample opportunity for practice and drill.²

These skills, moreover, possess a universality which transcends the limitations of any particular intellectual problem; hence they are capable of abstraction and generalization. Accordingly the teacher should, from the outset, begin the process of abstraction and generalization. But at a later stage in the students' education there is a place for systematic and abstract instruction in the generalized intellectual skills and techniques which must be employed in all problem-solving situations in the realm of ideas.

3. Understanding is equally complex. It involves a verbal understanding of what is said or written; an understanding, incidentally, which depends far more on the pupils' previous experience than has typically been recognized in the class room. But the real meaning of an idea extends far beyond that which is ordinarily implied by "understanding what is said." It includes the consequences to which action based upon the idea would lead. And it requires, also, a perception of the logical relations of the idea in question with other ideas, a grasp of the idea in the context of its place in a system of ideas.

Unfortunately learning through problem solving, as it has been understood in educa-

² Obviously the amount of practice required will vary from student to student. There is nothing educationally vicious in drill *per se*; it becomes vicious when it is conducted in a context devoid of meaning for the student, when it becomes a substitute for required diagnostic and remedial instruction or when it's prolonged beyond the point necessary to establish the skill desired.

tional literature, and as it has been practiced in the schools, where it has been practiced at all, has typically ignored the importance both of expertness in the use of intellectual skills and of facility in the analysis and utilization of logically integrated ideological systems. To a considerable extent this neglect has been due to a crude empiricism which has, for the most part, failed to comprehend the vital role of theory in inquiry. But whatever the reason, problem solving, if it is to reach its maximum effectiveness as a method of learning, must find a place for practice in the more important intellectual skills and for intellectual understandings which include, as an integral aspect of understanding, a grasp both of the role of theory in thought, and of ideas in the context of their place in a logically coherent system.

Finally, two major types of attitudes may be recognized. The first of these concerns enjoyments and tastes, likes and dislikes. The second concerns the fundamental emotional, moral and aesthetic orientations of the human personality. This latter category, however, brings us within the jurisdiction of depth psychology; accordingly any discussion of it requires the recognition of at least two levels of personality. At the conscious level such orientations are represented primarily by the verbalized attitudes, evaluations and standards espoused by the individual. They contain, therefore, a significant intellectual element, but they differ from sheer intellectual understanding in that they are infused with deep personal involvements and commitments. Hence they are endowed with meaning in the emotional and evaluational as well as in the intellectual sense of the term.

At a deeper level may be found the fundamental presuppositions, assumptions and categories which underlie all conscious thought and judgment. Absorbed from the culture, often without deliberate instruction, these "of course" postulates are typically unanalyzed, and frequently wholly or partially unrecognized. One of the most definitive indications, indeed, of the presuppositional character of the unstated premises of an argument is the surprise, confusion and anger usually aroused

by the sudden identification of such premises accompanied by a demand for their rational justification.

At this, or at a still deeper, level will be found also the primary personality adjustments and inclinations which, together with the presuppositions just noted, form the basic structure of human personality. Here, of course, belong the fundamental emotional patterns that pervade the inmost core of the personality and color every thought and action. As unconscious but powerful attitudes towards specific persons, groups and aspects of life these emotional patterns possess a tremendous import for human thought and conduct. But the way in which these emotional patterns, and these fundamental postulates are woven into the total structure of the person so as to form either a harmonious or a divided personality possesses far greater importance. No less significant is the extent to which the personality structure is able to comprehend and order the objective conditions of life and the degree to which it is infused with a basic feeling of security, anxiety or guilt.

Despite studies, such as those of Sheldon, which indicate that temperament may to a significant degree be influenced by original nature, there is ample evidence that personality structures are built rather than inborn. This means, of course, that they are for the most part learned. But while basic emotional patterns and postulates are influenced by knowledge and skill they are not learned primarily by the techniques of memorization, practice and rational analysis customarily employed by the school. On the contrary they are, first of all, a product of the way in which the child is related to his social group and the way in which he participates in its life. Both the quality of group life and the individual's place in it are important here. For, in the last analysis the emotional structure of the individual is at once a reflection, in his own unique way, of the categories, modes, attitudes and nuances prevalent in the behavior of those persons with whom he is intimately associated and a reaction to his treatment by other members of the social group, and to his status and role in the social structure.

101 • The Classroom Atmosphere for Problem-solving

One of our principal goals in teaching is to develop in individual students the skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge necessary to deal thoughtfully with social problems and to take a responsible part in their solution. But teachers cannot implant these outcomes directly in the minds and characters of individual students. Rather, they must work with groups of students to develop group standards and an atmosphere that will lend social support and reinforcement to desired learning outcomes in individual students. Max R. Goodson, an experienced teacher and administrator, attempts to formulate the characteristics which teachers should seek to build in the classroom group in order to develop reflective and cooperative thinking on social problems.

Children are to have practice in solving problems, they require a social organization with certain characteristics. The development of these represents a chief departure from the procedures of assignment-recitation and the drill periods of some classrooms.

Sometimes, this development is neglected. Then the teacher remains the authority-figure and arbiter in solving problems. Without group development, children frequently never become emotionally emancipated from their blind acceptance of the authority-role of the teacher. Therefore, they are hindered in learning the skills and insights of problem-solving. There are at least four requirements of social organization.

Supportive Relationships Among Children

Problem-solving requires changes in the feelings, thinking, and acting of children. The group with interpersonally helpful relations among its members, facilitates such changes. The individual does the changing. But the

group is the medium through which changes are suggested to the individual, tried out by him, and fixed in him. Through supportive relationships, children aid one another in making changes. Then changes can be stabilized because they are grounded in group phenomena such as group standards and the roles that individuals take in group functioning.

Power To Reject Equivalent To Power To Accept

Problem-solving rests upon genuine choice-making. The involvement of children in problem-solving requires that they possess a potency to reject an innovation of feeling, thinking, and acting that is as great as their potency to accept a change. Under this condition children can internalize a needed innovation. . . .

The child must have a sense of what to do and what not to do. The teacher's responsibility is to guard against children crossing those limits that are necessary to their safety and security. Neither the autocratic nor the laissez-faire situation is sufficient for providing children with the necessary boundaries and the required freedom. In the authoritar-

[From Max R. Goodson, "Problem-Solving In the Elementary School," *Progressive Education*, 27 (March 1950): 143-147. The passage quoted is found on page 145. Reprinted by permission of the authors and *Progressive Education*.]

ian teacher-class relationship, children do not internalize boundaries to become self-secure and self-sufficient. Therefore, they remain overly dependent upon the teacher. Also, they possess no real power either to reject or to accept new ideas and actions. In the laissez-faire situation, children lack the security of boundaries. Also, they lack the effective power either to reject or to accept because ideas and actions cannot be clear to them. Confusion blocks internalization. For the development of problem-solving, a social organization of children that incorporates the four conditions, herewith discussed, represents a necessary alternative to teacher or child autocracy and to a laissez-faire situation in the classroom.

*Interdependent Roles Assumed by
Children in Problem-solving*

Effective social organization requires that group members assume interdependent roles. Some children may take a role of initiating ideas or plans more readily than others. Other children may be particularly apt in examining and testing the adequacy of plans against realities in their situation and for reaching the goals the group formulates. Still other children readily take the lead in acting on

ideas. For children to solve problems, a team relationship among them that embraces the necessary competencies for making the changes required by problem-solving, needs to be developed. Stereotyping a child in a particular role should be avoided, however. An opportunity for meeting the requirement of different competencies assures the development of the various skills and insights of problem-solving.

Communication as a Requirement

Without communication among children, problem-solving would be almost impossible. Also, the social organization of children can develop only through communication. Words frequently present barriers to problem-solving, however. Discourse that becomes just a chain of words does not solve a problem. When used effectively, words are referred constantly to ideas (plans of action) and to realities. Thus, the word-reference is kept clear. The psychological condition of shared interests and experience among group members is a necessary factor in communication. Another factor is the need of effective physical conditions of group audience for children to listen to one another.

102 • Developing Habits of Critical Thinking

What, specifically, are the habits of mind which teachers seek to develop in students as they study controversial issues and problems? The principal canons of method are drawn from two sources. The first source is "scientific method," the general ways of collecting and dealing with evidence which have been employed so successfully in accumulating valid scientific knowledge during the modern period of Western history. The second source is "democratic method," the general way in which people work cooperatively toward common solutions to the issues they face. In the following selection, Frances Hunter Ferrell presents her version of a fusion of scientific and democratic methods in classroom instruction.

[From Frances Hunter Ferrell, "They Learn to Think for Themselves," *Progressive Education* 26 (Oct. 1948): 12-14. Reprinted by permission of the author and *Progressive Education*.]

Many are the teaching positions which are lost by the teacher's presentation or stand upon controversial issues. It has been said that the teacher must teach the truth, but teach it with discretion. This, however, can mean many things, such as presenting the truth with a Republican slant in a Republican community or with a Democratic slant in a community of Democrats. You are all no doubt familiar with the story of the man who wrote an unbiased account of the American Revolution from the English point of view. So the knowledge that we must teach the truth with discretion does not help us much unless we give the word discretion a definition. Using the dictionary, I see that discretion means prudence, which means wisdom, care, judgment. So let us teach controversial issues with discretion.

I should like to consider the teacher's role in regard to the presentation of controversial issues under four headings: (1) aiding the student in approaching the question with an open mind, (2) helping the student to secure all the information which he possibly can, (3) guiding him in working out a pattern of evaluation of evidence, and (4) directing classroom discussion in accord with democratic principles.

WITH AN OPEN MIND

At the outset of the study . . . both teacher and student must decide whether they are going to seek the truth or merely hunt for evidence which will support the position which they may already have taken. The ideal of intellectual integrity must be held in high esteem by all. Now the cultivation of intellectual integrity is not accomplished in "the twinkling of an eye," but by long and tireless effort on the part of the teacher, developing by both precept and example, especially the latter, this highly important ideal which must underlie all intellectual endeavor.

Having fostered this wholesome attitude, the teacher must then aid the students in their quest for the truth. Here the students must

be introduced to or aided in the use of previously acquired library techniques. Students, I think, get a real thrill when they learn to use *The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. Sending away for material also seems to strike the students' fancy. Getting information on controversial issues is not difficult for so many pressure groups are anxious to pounce upon both student and teacher, dishing out their propaganda.

EVALUATING THE EVIDENCE

Guiding the students in working out a pattern of evaluation of information is a more difficult feat than finding the facts. The students must learn to be cautious . . . let the reader beware. Everett Dean Martin, in his book *The Behavior of Crowds*, gives timely warning against "the tyranny of ideas uncritically accepted." And many ideas are uncritically accepted due, among other things, to the fact that we teach our students too much respect for the printed page. Henry Johnson says: "The tendency of pupils accustomed in school to look upon the printed page itself as evidence of the truth of what is printed is to continue in after life in subjection to the tyranny of the printed page."¹

Now the students in evaluating the information available on any subject must be made cognizant of the necessity of testing all evidence for (1) reliability, (2) relevancy, (3) sufficiency, and (4) interpretation.

Are the Facts Reliable?

How reliable is the source of information? The rather commonplace expression that we hear daily, "Consider the source," is certainly not commonplace in its meaning and implication. The students must learn to follow through, examining carefully the source. Let them ask themselves these questions:

1. Are the statements of facts, which are offered as evidence, reports (a) of observations, (b) of inferences from what has been observed, or (c) "hearsay"?

¹ Henry Johnson, *The Teaching of History*, p. 301.

2. Are the statements of facts reliable?
 - a. Who made them?
 - b. Is he a competent witness?
 - c. What was his purpose in reporting the facts? To make news? To eulogize? To discredit? To convey accurate information?
 - d. Under what conditions were the observations made? Casual observations? Carefully controlled experiments? Emotional stress?
 - e. To what extent did the reporter depend upon memory? ²

At the outset one runs into difficulty because many students do not understand what is meant by inference, and it is not easy to get this across. Having found a definition and example, the students might profitably spend several days looking through newspapers and magazines for observations and inferences until they are quite conscious of the distinction and alert to detect the difference.

Are the Facts Relevant?

Mathematics teaches us to discard all irrelevant data. Many people believe in confining this skill to working problems in higher mathematics, but the students must learn that this skill is equally applicable to all of life's problems. Note what a conglomeration and mixture of relevant data, irrelevant facts, emotional outbursts, and what have you are brought forth in a discussion of a controversial issue in the realm of the social studies. For example, the question of aid to Britain is apt to get cluttered up with a discussion of the personal disposition and characteristics of an individual Englishman, English mercantilism in pre-revolutionary days, the Irish question, and Mahatma Gandhi. On the question of the right of labor to strike the students may let discussions of labor leaders who are racketeers or individuals who have cheated on "relief" obscure the main issue. Let the students learn to ask themselves these questions.

1. Are all of the facts presented as evidence relevant to the question?

² From an unpublished manuscript by F. C. Hood, University of Illinois.

2. How might irrelevant facts be used to serve a writer's or speaker's purpose? To divert interest or attention from other facts? To stir feeling? To shape attitudes and dispositions toward the issue? To change perspectives? ³

Are the Facts Sufficient?

"Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?" the witness at court is mumblingly asked. The same might be thoughtfully asked of students when discussing controversial issues, especially the second part which concerns the whole truth. It has been said that the artist is known by what he omits. Likewise one's position upon a controversial issue is often known by what one omits. A good way to get this idea across to students in a United States History class is to let them read between five and ten accounts of the Pinchot-Ballinger controversy. They will soon notice how certain facts are emphasized by some authors and totally ignored by others. It will soon occur to them that the concealment of certain facts changes the picture. So it is with all issues, and the students must learn to be cautious about forming a judgment without knowing the whole truth. One does well to keep in mind the words of Benjamin Franklin at the Constitutional Convention: "For, having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged, by better information or fuller consideration, to change opinions, even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise." But here both teacher and student are confronted with the problem of how to learn the whole truth. However, cognizance of the fact that new evidence might be brought to light which would alter our judgment will at least help the students to maintain open minds on the question.

Are the Facts Properly Interpreted?

Noting interpretation placed upon facts is very important. By reading several contemporary newspapers and magazines students can readily see how authors differ in their interpretation of the facts. This should lead them

³ *Ibid.*

to see the importance of asking themselves these questions: Do the facts necessarily mean what the author has interpreted them to mean? Can they be given any other interpretation?

DISCUSSING THE ISSUE

Having read widely and wisely, having carefully evaluated their reading, the students are now ready to present their findings to the class. Here the teacher has an excellent opportunity to imbue the students with the ethics of democratic discussion, based upon the principle that every one has the right to hear and be heard. Alas and alack, this is not taught in one lesson. I think there is no lovelier way to start this than by having the students read portions of James Madison's *Journal of the Constitutional Convention* in which they see for themselves how people of widely different points of view thrashed out controversial issues of their day through the process of demo-

cratic discussion, thereby building a constitution which has stood the test of time. Students in class must understand that teacher and students are engaged in the common pursuit of truth, not in winning a debate, that through the combined efforts of all seasoned judgment may be brought to bear upon the problems of our day.

And so we discuss in our class in American History at the John Marshall High School of Chicago controversial issues of our day. I do not promise that such procedure will save your job or entirely free your students or their parents from prejudice or from looking at questions from the emotional rather than the intellectual point of view. However, I do feel that such procedure points the way to a better approach to controversial issues and, in the words of William the Silent, "It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake, or to succeed in order to persevere."⁴

⁴ Cited by Robert Maynard Hutchins in *Education for Freedom*, p. 105.

103 • How to Deal with Controversy in the Classroom

Social problems are always controversial. What principles can teachers use to ensure that controversy leads to desirable learning outcomes rather than to disruptive conflict in the classroom, the school, and the community? Fred T. Wilhelms answers this question in the form of advice to a teacher.

Let's take a good bit for granted. I assume that you know that the lively, controversial questions of the day are a different kind of subject matter and simply cannot be taught out of a book or even within the four walls of a classroom. You can get plenty of guidance on teaching devices that match the subject matter—excursions, interviews, the use of

many kinds of material from many interested sources, etc. If you don't have the energy and initiative for that sort of thing—if you choose to go on getting all the answers out of one book, or supplying them yourself—it's probably better to let the whole thing alone than to make an academic pretense.

I assume, too, that you are mature enough

[From Fred T. Wilhelms, "Letter to a Teacher: On Handling Controversial Issues," *Progressive Education*, 26 (Oct. 1948): 8-12. Reprinted by permission of the author and *Progressive Education*.]

to know that a social problem worth taking up at all is worth treating soberly. Simply rule out sarcasm and every form of pettiness. If it's a serious question for many people, treat it that way, and keep the treatment on a high plane. If it isn't, why not just skip it?

What I really want to get at are five mental habits and procedures I believe you and your class have got to master.

1. *Focus on the Problem, Not on the Fight*

A controversial question arises because people have a problem on their hands, think they see a way out, and seek action. The opposition may come from groups who do not sense the problem, are not affected by it, or for some reason do not want anything done about it; or it may come from groups equally eager to solve the problem, who are sold on different ways of doing it.

Now when you come to study the resultant controversy, you have a choice: You can analyze the problem and *then* see what the various parties propose to do about it, evaluating each set of proposals in the light of the problem to be solved. Or, like irresponsible hoodlums cheering on a street fight, you can analyze tactics and titillate interest by starting a miniature replica of the struggle within your classroom, while forgetting the objectives.

I think you simply haven't any cornerstone under your thinking until you understand what the need is, what is wanted, how important it is. Maybe the problem is an old, abiding plague of the human race, suddenly accentuated under modern conditions; try to see it in its historical perspective. Maybe it is a brand new product of our new environment; try to see the forces that have shaped it. Nothing else will help you so much to the objectivity you need as to keep your eye on the fundamental objective.

2. *Hunt for Common Ground*

Rarely are the parties in a controversy wholly in disagreement. They may be agreed on objectives, disagreed on means; or agreed on at least *some* objectives or *some* means; they

may, in fact, be agreed on just about everything—perhaps without realizing it. For democratic action whatever real common ground exists is precious. For it is the starting point toward an acceptable solution. Hunting it out bears no relation to the weak-kneed practice of compromising away essential points of either faction in order to achieve a polite harmony. In a hot controversy the school may be almost the only place where enough calm prevails so that the points of agreement can be perceived and built upon. A school is acting irresponsibly if, like some newspapers, it stirs up more conflict than actually exists by sensationalizing what does exist.

One related bit of advice: Don't be too glib in stating other people's positions for them. You've no right either to exaggerate their demands or to whittle them down to something "reasonable." If labor and management, for instance, are involved, let each of them tell you—directly or through its publications—where they stand. Let your students learn to use primary sources instead of hearsay.

3. *Define the Issues*

Having identified the common ground, you are in position to identify the residual points at issue. Strip them down as far as possible to the real differences. For instance, there has been quite a debate about grade labeling, with some pretty strong impugning of motives on both sides. Eventually the leaders of the two factions discovered that they were wholly agreed on the basic purpose of labeling, which is to give consumers accurate information to choose by. It became clear, furthermore, that both were agreed on "descriptive" rather than grade labeling for all products except foods—and pretty well agreed on the grade labeling of certain foods. That restricted the area of debate almost entirely to processed fruits and vegetables; and it narrowed the issue to whether a grade label or a descriptive label better informs a canned food buyer—a question that can be worked out without much rancor.

However, the purpose of defining the issues is not necessarily to moderate the debate. It

is to determine exactly what the specific points of disagreement are. Once more, one should not be too cavalier in stating those issues for all parties. Find out as directly as possible from the parties themselves—and don't be taken in by the red herrings they sometimes use to keep the public from nosing out the real issues.

At this point, then, you will be able to set down what a lawyer would call the "stipulations" (the points which are not in question) and the issues (the points that are). Work out as precise a wording as you can. Keep it in view. Try to make it calm and unemotional. Your purpose is not to stir up an excited, glandular reaction.

4. *Develop Criteria or Standards of Reference*

The great basic premises, from which specific controversial questions are merely offshoots, all too often go unspoken, unquestioned, and unrecognized. No one can argue a specific issue soundly unless he knows what his reference criteria are. And no youngster is likely to clarify his standards of reference except as he is forced to apply them to specifics.

Given any specific issue you need to keep probing behind it: "You believe in democracy, don't you? What do you think it means in this situation? How does this proposal square up with your conception of democracy?" Such probing will enrich and realize the concept of democracy at the same time that it enlightens the issue. Religion is another good source of value standards: "How do the teachings of your religion apply? Are you going to back a proposal contrary to them?" The American codes of sportsmanship and fair play are another source: "If it's important to help an opponent up when he has been knocked down, what should you do about this social question?"

Get the reference criteria stated clearly and simply. Keep referring to them. Don't forget, either, that the differences which show up on a specific question may stem back to legitimate differences in basic premises. So don't

demand unanimity on standards of reference. Work for as much agreement in standards as you can genuinely get; respect the residual differences. For instance, on some question of economic regulation, a whole class will agree on democracy as a frame of reference. But one youngster's concept of democracy may stress freedom of the strong to rise, while another is more interested in protection for all the people, even the less able. After all, one of the blessings in a democracy is the right to help define it. Help each to see just what his premises are and how they affect his conclusions.

5. *Be Realistic About the Proposed Alternatives*

Nothing so dismays me as to see one of the great persisting problems of mankind casually "solved" in about three days by a roomful of students. Who do they think they are, to be so much wiser than their elders—Little Orphan Annie?

There is precisely one difference between them and their elders: The grownups have to face the realities—lack of money, public apathy, politics, etc. And until school children also have to look those realities in the eye, the whole school treatment of social "problems" is a travesty.

A large number of the divisive social questions of our day hinge on the expenditure of public tax funds. "Where's the money coming from?" is a real and pressing question to responsible adults (even if often used speciously by obstructionists). It is seldom given very realistic attention in the classroom; there the unspoken assumption seems to be that if a public proposal is "good," it ought to be supported without further question. Well, a lot of things would be "good" for my family, too, but we still have to make a budget, and it never covers all of them. I do not mean that we should teach defeatism or timidity; but can't we establish the constructive attitude of a *responsible* person?

Another large share of public issues hinges around the imposition of social controls and regulation. Am I right in feeling that in the classroom situation the dice are commonly

loaded a wee bit in favor of governmental action? Not because teachers are socialist or collectivist, but—I think—because the neat, orderly, blueprinted way is easier to describe and defend, to some extent compelling upon the mind. What we call loosely the “free enterprise” way (referring here not merely to business affairs) is less susceptible of charting and orderly classroom presentation.

Again, I am not arguing for a “conservative” line or saying that we should not present forcefully the potentials of wise group action. But when we are presumably considering alternatives, let’s *really* scrutinize them—on out to the ultimate commitment.

Obviously such treatment is likely to take more time than is generally given to a bit of subject matter. Well, we don’t assign a geometry problem and then stop halfway through it because it takes too long. And the analogy is uncomfortably exact.

6. *And, of Course, Keep Your Weight off the Decision*

The teacher and the school are not arbiters of social questions. The basic assumption underlying the school’s presenting controversial questions at all is that it will throw no official weight into influencing the student one way or another.

104 • Classroom Methods in Problem-solving: Three Illustrative Cases

Thus far we have been dealing with teaching method at the level of principle and analysis. More concretely, what is instruction like when the method of problem-solving is focused upon a specific problem? The following three cases are presented to suggest an answer to this question. They are, of course, not definitive models but rather *examples* of attempts to focus instruction on problems. The method of teaching developed in this chapter does not admit of fixed and final models applicable to any and all teaching situations. Each teacher and group of students must build a pattern of instruction appropriate to their own situation, their level of development, and their developing sense of what problems it is possible and important to study. The method stresses inventiveness in each classroom situation rather than standardization.

The three case studies consist of stenographic reports or recordings of actual classroom procedures in the study of problems. The first, taken from the yearbook of the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago—a noted pioneer school in the development of modern education—illustrates procedures that might be used in dealing with a means problem in the elementary school. The second case depicts the methods used by Max R. Goodson, an experienced teacher and college administrator, in exploring a purely factual problem with his secondary-school class in general science. The final excerpt, edited by B. Othanel Smith, presents the procedures that might be used at the secondary level in the study of a value problem.

A Means Problem in the Elementary School

No textbook is used in the geography work of this grade. All information necessary is gained from reference books. . . . Imaginary journeys in search of food furnish the motive for study. Cacao and meat are the two types selected,—they are taken because of their direct appeal and their wide application. Through cacao the tropical regions are covered, and through meat the temperate and arctic. Physical, locational, mathematical and anthropo-geographic points may well be developed from these two seemingly inadequate types. A large, loose-leafed notebook, of rough gray paper, is made by each child. This is the *Travel Book*, and in it are kept records of the trips, such as maps, time-tables, pictures of railroads, ships, peoples, homes, products, etc.

The first journey starts with the search for cacao. Preparations are made for the trip from Chicago to New York. The Great White Fleet steamer is used from New York to Jamaica. Observations are noted along the route and after arrival. A day's visit to a cacao plantation in Jamaica is made. Full observations of the planting, growth, gathering, and preparing for shipment of the cacao beans are noted. At this point a real trip is taken to the Garfield Park Conservatory, to see a real cacao tree. A second real trip is then taken to the Bunte candy factory, where are seen the full processes of making cocoa and chocolate. The amount of cacao beans used by this factory raises the question, "Does Jamaica supply the world with cacao?" Other regions similar to Jamaica in climate are searched for. The journey lengthens out through the Panama Canal, to Ecuador, across the Andes, down the Amazon, across the Atlantic, through central Africa, across the Indian Ocean to southeastern Asia and the East Indies. Position, climate, surface, differing products, people, and routes of travel, are all

developed through this study. Several actual trips are taken to the Lincoln Park Zoo to see the animals that are met with on the journeys.

Several big questions arise in this work that only the laboratory can answer adequately. The following pages give the questions and the laboratory work involved:

In the journey from New York to Jamaica, a child asked, "If we are out of sight of land, how does the captain know the directions?" A second pupil answered, "The compass tells him." The first child replied, "But what is the compass, really?"

Experiments. The Compass. Magnetizing a needle and floating it on water. Observing the direction which a suspended magnetized bar takes. Making a simple electro-magnet. Noting effect of electric current on the compass. Using the compass to find directions in the room. Noting effect of iron in the room on the compass. Locating magnetic poles on world-map.

Having arrived at Jamaica, a pupil asked, "Why is it warmer here than in Chicago?" A second child answered, "Jamaica is nearer the equator." But the first child retorted, "I don't see what that has to do with it, besides, I don't see why there are summer and winter anyway—the sun is shining just the same."

The work done to answer this question is given here in rather full detail, since its solving took many weeks and proved to have some rather wide correlations.

Experiment. Changing Seasons and Light Distribution. The school room was darkened, and with a globe, a stereopticon spotlight, a twilight circle, and a yardstick, the differing positions of the earth, with relation to the vertical rays of the sun, were worked out. The distribution of light, with

the varying length of day and night, was observed.

Several lessons were devoted to the summing up of the results of this experiment.

Drawings were made of the earth in its different positions. Names were given to the four important positions: spring, summer, autumn, winter. The words *solstice* and *equinox* were introduced.

A Means Problem in the Secondary School

The primary purpose of this unit is to afford the pupil an opportunity to think operationally. Such thinking involves defining a problem in terms of specific questions to be answered, suggesting hypotheses which tentatively answer selected questions, testing the hypotheses by operations, rejecting those hypotheses not supported by facts, and elaborating the hypothesis which is so supported until all questions are answered satisfactorily.

To use the tested answer to a question in arriving at an answer to a different but related question depends upon drawing logical inferences, upon reasoning. The device of logical correspondence, referred to in some learning activities, is a device for logically organizing subject matter to give it a more complete meaning.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

WHICH RELATE TO THE COMPLETE ACT OF THOUGHT

A. Observe the operation of a steam engine, an example of a prime mover. The group will discuss the spontaneous questions asked by pupils and study figure 348, page 495, in *Science for Today*¹ in order to learn the terminology of the various parts of a steam engine.

A steam engine of about one tenth horse-

¹O. W. Caldwell and F. D. Curtis, *Science for Today*, Boston: Ginn and Co., 1936.

power under twenty pounds' pressure, including a boiler of about two-gallon capacity, was displayed and operated as illustrative of a power unit which transforms heat energy into energy of motion.

B. Write a list of questions about the steam engine and its operations. The questions of all pupils were mimeographed so that the questions of every pupil were available to each pupil irrespective of duplication. Under actual teaching conditions, thirty pupils made a composite list of one hundred and twenty-one questions.

C. Evaluate each of the questions according to the following criteria:

1. Can it be answered in terms of operations?
2. How comprehensive is it in scope? Does the answer to it answer other questions by implication?
3. Is the answer obvious? Can it be answered by one's looking at a diagram or at the engine?

These criteria were not dogmatically assigned, but were developed in class after the pupils had some experience in attempting to select the best questions. The questions were criticized and elaborated by the pupils in class discussion.

The individual submitting a question was

[From Max R. Goodson, "Learning to Think About Power (Grade IX)," in Charles W. Sanford *et al.*, *Student Teaching*, Champaign: Stipes Publishing Co., 1940, pp. 73, 78-83. Used by permission.]

given an opportunity either to defend it or to retract it. From the entire group of questions, questions were selected which met the criteria set forth.

When this unit was taught, the pupils agreed that four questions of the one hundred and twenty-one questions fully satisfied the criteria. The four questions were used to guide experimentation upon the steam engine. One of the questions which promoted much discussion in class was: What is the source of the power of the engine? To illustrate the pattern of inquiry in which the pupils engaged to answer the four questions, each phase of the complete act of thought, as it bears upon this one question, will be elaborated under the appropriate learning activity.

D. Elaborate hypotheses as possible answers to the questions selected by the pupils.

This was done in class discussion so that each pupil would have hypotheses even though they might be the result of what was said in the discussion. As a written exercise, each pupil took one of the four questions and elaborated in detail various hypotheses as possible answers to it.

Three hypotheses were elaborated as possible answers to the question: What is the source of power of the engine? Hypothesis *A*: the heat of the steam; hypothesis *B*: the pressure of the steam; hypothesis *C*: a combination of heat and pressure. The three hypotheses were supported by three factions within the class. However, the support given a hypothesis was tentative in that all the pupils were anxious to test the hypotheses operationally.

E. Devise operations to test the hypotheses.

Each pupil was given an opportunity to devise operations to test hypotheses suggested for any given question.

To test hypothesis *A*, the operation of the engine on cold and compressed air was suggested and agreed to by all the pupils. To test hypothesis *B*, it was suggested that the cylinder of the engine be heated by means of a Bunsen burner. Hypothesis *C* was tested by comparing the power of the engine when op-

erated on steam pressure with its power when operated on air pressure, the factor of pressure being held constant. This suggestion involved a method of measuring the power of an engine and was related to one of the other three questions: What is the power of the engine? The final decision in regard to the validity of the hypothesis *C* had to await the development of a method of measuring power. The respective validity of each of the other two hypotheses was immediately available after the appropriate operations were performed on the engine.

F. The teacher, with the help of some pupils, performs the operations on the engine before the class.

G. Pupils record in notebooks the facts observed which result from performing the operations.

The pupils observed that the engine ran on compressed air but did not run when heat was applied to the cylinder.

H. Determine the validity of the hypotheses by interpreting the facts in the light of the question for which the hypothesis is a tentative answer. Further interpret the facts as to the propositions they will support. In instances where the facts are not adequate to support a proposition, re-checking should be done to obtain more facts.

The pupils rejected hypothesis *A* because it was not supported by facts. At the same time they accepted hypothesis *B*, but some pupils still thought that the factor of heat had something to do with the power of the engine. This was later confirmed when hypothesis *C* was tested operationally.

I. Elaborate answers to selected questions until all questions are answered. Elaborate by establishing logical correspondence between ideas according to the "If . . . then . . ." formula.

Operations performed on the engine demonstrated the validity of hypothesis *B*, that the pressure was the source of power. The elaboration of this hypothesis, when associated with the fact that the valve-action re-

verses the flow of steam or air going into the cylinder, will answer the question: Steam pushed the piston out, but what pulls the piston back in? The pressure of the steam or air pushes the piston out and also pushes it back into the cylinder.

The tested hypotheses, along with their elaborations which when associated with other data answered all the questions, constituted in the main the subject matter of the part of the unit which dealt with the complete act of thought.

J. Prepare graphs to show the relationship of pressure to the revolutions per minute of the engine; relationship of steam pressure to the horse power of the engine; relationship of air pressure to the horse power of the engine; and the relationship of the revolutions per minute of the engine to its horse power. The data are collected from several runs of the engine with the pressure varying.

K. Collect data needed in calculating the horse power of the engine. Calculate the horse power according to a formula.

L. In order to get a comprehensive view of what we have done thus far in the unit, set

up in block form what we have done each day in terms of the experiences you have had. Establish connecting links which relate each block of experience with every other block.

This activity developed for each pupil an understanding of the parts as they related to the whole unit. This activity was done once when it was evident that several pupils in the class were having difficulty in seeing how the day-by-day activities were all related.

EVALUATION

Since the pupils have participated in developing the form of the unit, they should carry the responsibility of passing judgment on what they have done. Pupils will discuss the unit as they look back over it according to four points:

A. State reactions to the procedure. Do you like it or do you not like it? Give reasons for your reactions.

B. Write a brief resumé of what you have learned about power.

C. Make a list of five questions upon which you feel any member of the class should be able to write intelligently.

D. Make a list of specific suggestions as to how the procedure might be improved.

Dealing with a Value Problem

The normative unit is a means of studying those unsettled situations in which people are divided over loyalties and social goals. It deals with situations in which the ends are uncertain, confused, or in conflict; situations in which little consideration can be given to the problem of means without giving primary attention to the clarification of the goals to be attained. The personal character of the individual, as we have pointed out, is a central factor—one of the problematic elements

of the situation. In other words, the issues studied in a normative unit involve relations among persons—among their interests, attitudes, conceptions, and modes of thought. In the case now to be described, this and some related approaches to a discipline of practical intelligence are seen in operation.

In a social problems course¹ in which the

¹ The writer is indebted to Mr. S. H. Engle, University High School, University of Illinois, for this illustrative material. . . .

teacher developed a normative unit on the status of the Negro in American society, the unit began with an effort to locate the points of difficulty within the student group. The points were revealed in various ways—by assertions of assumed facts, statements of policy, and affirmations of normative principles—in the informal exploratory discussion which follows.

ELIZABETH: Negroes are not as intelligent as white people and they are always getting into trouble. I believe that Negroes were happier when they were slaves and were well taken care of by their white masters. There were no race riots then.

PAT: I don't think Negroes can be trusted. We had a Negro maid once and she would steal anything she could get her hands on. We finally had to let her go.

MARTHA: I don't think you should judge all Negroes by just one case. We had a white maid once and she would steal, too.

MARY: Negroes are all right if they keep their place. It is these northern Negroes that are spoiled by the white men that are a problem. They try to crowd you off the sidewalk.

BILL: I don't see what you mean by keeping their place. They are Americans, aren't they, just like the rest of us? Why don't they have a right to walk on the sidewalk like anyone else? Besides, some Negroes do pretty well. I play in a dance orchestra and it seems to me that Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington do pretty well. They aren't anybody's fools.

ELIZABETH: Well, Negroes may be all right in their place but I just can't stand to have them acting like white people.

KATHRYN: I lived in Georgia for three years and Negroes and whites there are not allowed to go to the same school or sit together in a railroad car or in the theater or to go to the same restaurants or hotels. They just don't mix in Georgia. They don't seem to have any trouble there either, as they do in Detroit.

JOHN: I think you are all being very unfair to the Negroes. In the first place, you

talk as if they were all the same. Of course some Negroes are ignorant and some are dishonest but that doesn't mean that they all are. So are some white people ignorant and dishonest. And besides, Negroes, if they are given a chance, can be just as good and useful citizens as any other people. Look at George Washington Carver. He was certainly a useful citizen to have around. Not many of you seem to object to seeing Negro athletes perform or listening to Negro musicians. I read an article the other day written by some officer in the Army that said Negroes are making excellent soldiers. The trouble is that we don't give the Negroes a chance. The breaks are all against them. It doesn't seem fair to me.

PAT: I have a sister in Chicago who lives just a few blocks away from the Negro district. I surely wouldn't want to live there.

BILL: I think that some of you are just prejudiced against the Negroes. You don't really know why you don't like them but you are ready to condemn all Negroes just the same. Why don't you judge white people the same way you do Negroes? I think the whites are more to blame than the Negroes for a riot like the one in Detroit. Some whites just want to lord it over someone and the Negroes are handy, so they get the works. I think it's about time we start giving the Negroes a break.

KATHRYN: Would you like to have a Negro family move into the house next door to you?

BILL: Well, I suppose I wouldn't like it too well but then I guess that is mostly because it isn't being done every day. I played on the same basketball team with a Negro and everybody treated him just like one of the fellows. What was wrong with that?

ELIZABETH: But you don't suppose that a Negro could ever become president of the United States?

BILL: No, I don't, because even if a Negro was best qualified for the job too many people would vote against him just because he was black.

ELIZABETH: And because in the first place Negroes are definitely inferior to whites in ability and intelligence and therefore no Negro would be qualified for the job.

JOHN: I think Bill is right about this. We certainly can't expect Negroes to progress if we don't give them a chance.

INEZ: I was raised by a Negro mammy. We go to see her every time we go back home. She was awfully good to me. But she can't even read or write. . . . She is awfully good-hearted, but she sure is superstitious.

TEACHER: Several of you seem to be quite unfriendly to the Negroes and quite unwilling to believe that the Negro is in any way equal to the white person. This question is plainly controversial as far as this class goes, and I don't see how we can settle it with any certainty without getting some more facts that bear upon it. For example, here is a study of the relative intelligence of 500 Negro elementary-school children in five schools in Los Angeles, who scored slightly higher on the National Intelligence Test than 500 white children in the same schools, and here is another study which arrived at similar results in comparing the intelligence of Negro and white children in New York. Possibly we can find other facts bearing on this question.

Then there is the question of whether the Negro is now being treated fairly, or to put it another way, is there really equality of opportunity as between Negroes and white people. Some of you seem to think that the Negro is getting as much consideration as he is entitled to. Others seem to think that the Negro is being treated unfairly and not being given a chance. . . . I am more concerned about this basic issue, which it seems to me has been present throughout this discussion. I am wondering if you are all in agreement as to just what equality of opportunity is or as to whether equality is a desirable thing.

JOHN: I think the real difference between us is in what we really consider equal treatment of people. Elizabeth starts out by saying that all Negroes are inferior people. As

we have just seen, we don't know for sure whether that is true or not. Anyway, she ends up by concluding that since all Negroes are inferior they have all been treated fairly.

TEACHER: Are you using the word "fairly" here to mean the same as "equally" which you used before?

JOHN: Yes, I mean the same—that they have been treated equally as soon as they have all been given an inferior education and forced into inferior jobs that no one else wants, at inferior pay. Of course, Negroes will always be inferior at that rate.

ELIZABETH: Well, I think they will but if they are able to progress it will have to be by their own effort. They must earn what they get. You can't just hand it to them on a platter.

JOHN: That is just what I mean. I believe, and I think Bill and possibly Martha and Inez agree with me, that we have not really been fair to the Negro when we lump them all together and treat them all as inferior people. We have not treated them equally until we give each individual Negro as good an education as we would give a white of equal ability, and until we stop discriminating against him in jobs and the like just because he is a Negro. I know I am not saying it well—Bill, do you understand what I mean?

BILL: You mean that Elizabeth favors putting the Negroes off in a separate class by themselves and treating them differently just because they are Negroes, and we favor treating all Negroes and whites alike—is that it?

JOHN: Yes, that's it.

ELIZABETH: That's putting it a little strong. I don't see how you can help the Negroes unless they are more willing and able to help themselves. Until that time comes, they will simply have to take a back seat, and we can't just kid ourselves into thinking they are all drivers.

JOHN: That's just it. I believe it is our responsibility to assist them in learning to drive.

TEACHER: That, it seems, is the basic issue which has run throughout this discussion. It is a difference as to what you consider to be equality of opportunity and possibly a further difference as to whether equality is really a good thing.

Locating the Types of Practical Judgment

This case clearly focuses in conflicts over points of *policy*. As the teacher finally noted, the major points of conflict in the group took forms which could be stated as follows:

- "Negroes are all right if they keep their place" *versus* "Negroes are Americans like the rest of us and should have equal political, economic, and social rights."

"If Negroes want a better status, let them attain it for themselves" *versus* "It should be the responsibility of white people to help the Negroes in their struggle for freedom and equality."

These points of general policy, however, are built up in a context of other general ideas, many of them also practical in nature. A good instructional procedure will open up this context. This is a sure route into the characters of the persons involved. The teacher sensed this. He directed the students in the search for generalizations which were related in one way or another to the issue and were not at first recognized as part of the significant thinking of the group.

Some of these general ideas were suggested in the exploratory discussion, others in later discussion. Before the different types among them are located, a general list should be noted:

1. Negroes should not hold public office.
2. Whites and Negroes should be separated in street cars and trains.
3. Negroes and whites should be permitted to attend the same schools.
4. The current fair employment regulation should be continued in peacetime.
5. All men should be treated as equals regardless of race, religion, or social position.
6. Each individual should be accepted as a person and given an equal opportunity to develop to his fullest capacity.

7. Negroes and whites should be separated in the community.

8. White people should be the judges of whether Negroes are behaving properly.

9. Labor unions should admit Negroes on the same basis as they admit whites.

These practical ideas may be divided into two interrelated types: those applicable to all men, and those applicable only to Negroes or to particular circumstances. The first is illustrated in the principle that "Each individual should be accepted as a person and given an equal opportunity to develop to his fullest capacity." This applies to all persons. The statement that "Negroes should not hold public office" illustrates the second type. It is of limited and specific application. These two types may be recognized as . . . (1) broad *practical generalizations* (also called general normatives) and (2) *policies*.

Checking Policies Against Broad Generalizations

While this case involved differing policies, it was at the same time wrestling with broad general normatives. The one stated is seen to be a basic democratic credo. The democratic creed in America comprises just such principles of general application. Practically everybody in America accepts these general principles verbally at least; few escape their molding influence. Nevertheless, in formulating and choosing public policies and measures, persons lacking ability to see and deal with the relations between these and the broad generalizations are more strongly motivated by special interests and prejudices than by the broader generalizations. The ability to deal with the relations between policies and generalizations can be developed by giving direct attention to them. One may, for instance, learn the fallacy of affirming loyalty to the idea that men should be free while yet holding that Negroes should not be admitted freely to theaters. When a person subscribes to freedom for all men and then sees this commitment come into conflict with special policies, as it will in decision making, he can at least learn to control the impulse to act only in accordance with the latter.

The students in this case were confronted with these interrelations of general normatives and proposed policies. They found that if unreasonable loyalties are to be rooted out, these must be brought under the influence of the normative generalizations which form the heart of the democratic creed. One of the prime conditions for examining prejudices from this standpoint is a clear comprehension of the broader ideals. The verbal symbols of equality, freedom, equal opportunity, and the like often become loaded with meanings imported from specialized perspectives and interests, and hence, while they are symbols of the common good, actually operate to the exclusive advantage of special groups and classes. In the normative unit, therefore, clarification of these value terms is one of the objects of study. This clarification must be sought partly in the literature of the democratic tradition, in the writings and public utterances of the great spokesmen of democracy, and not in the narrow experiences of the class group or in the rationalizations of the defenders of partisan views and special privilege. It must be sought also through the study of the value content of democracy again and again, in conflict after conflict, in unit after unit; for the meaning of these important social-moral norms cannot be gained in isolation from concrete issues where varied interpretations of the norms come to the surface and require attention.

The class group had already studied the democratic principles in previous units, but the students were again encouraged to search for the proper meanings in this new context of racial prejudices and tensions. They read and studied valuative stories and political literature bearing upon the ideals of freedom and equality applied to minority races as well as to people in general. This study, together with class discussions, served to clarify still further the general normative principles which effective, practical intelligence requires as a part of every democratic character. In accordance with the criterion of voluntary (uncoerced) common acceptance, one of the tests of policies is their consistency with these democratic principles, for they are the expres-

sion of a sort of standing consensus. They are the community in its ideological form. This test is often confusing because advocates of both good and bad policies often seek to justify them as deductions from democratic ideals. Everyone wishes the great symbols of the people to be on his side. But this is even further reason why attention must be directed to the clarification of basic, practical generalizations and to establishing consistency between these and policies.

Putting Policies to the Test of Facts

The preceding article pointed out the value of recognizing the three phases of a complete practical judgment and checking on their interrelations. The present case gives a good opportunity for doing and observing this. The students were aware of conflict and confusion in their group regarding what a more desirable state of affairs in race relations would be. They were trying to find a conception which they could hold in common. This is the first phase of a complete judgment and was the subject of the pages just preceding. Then, as we have seen, they repeatedly stated the facts in the case. This is the second phase, to which we turn presently. Throughout the discussion they were searching for a plan or plans of action. The policies they were after were these plans of action, the plans which would move race relations toward the better state of affairs. This is the third phase, and will be treated in the next section.

The first part of the students' discussion turned around questions of fact. In support of discriminatory policies, assertions of fact were made which as such were seriously open to question: "Negro people are not as intelligent as white people," "They were happier when they were slaves," "Negroes cannot be trusted" . . . These assertions of fact, although usually not facts at all, serve to create the illusion of sound reason and reliable authority. One who entertains such "facts" very easily defends the policy that Negroes be not admitted to theaters, restaurants, and hotels on equal terms with whites. Indeed, persons often hold these false "facts" as a result of

emotional commitment to the discriminatory policies.

Rigorous discipline in searching for the relation of our policies to their supporting facts is one of the surest routes we have to the making of better practical judgments. Schooling for such discipline is not only desirable; it is possible.

What is thus true of the relation of policy to facts is often equally true of the relation between broad general principles and facts. Sometimes there is no factual support for these broad ideas, as in the case of the German visions based upon the belief in the *Herrenvolk*. At other times the factual support is there but not seen, and the broad normatives are called visionary.

The students gave much attention to the claims of factual support of the differing ideas of good policy. They were invited to supply the source of factual statements offered as evidence of the rightness of their biases. This led the group into the literature bearing upon the comparative intelligence of the races, the criminal tendencies and public behavior of Negroes and whites, and other assumed facts about races and their relations. In this activity they were learning not only how to locate facts, but also how to examine facts for their accuracy and sufficiency as evidence in support of beliefs about social realities as well as about loyalties and policies.

It is, of course, patent that indefensible ideas of policy will not necessarily melt away under the heat of facts. Such popular beliefs are reinforced by institutional arrangements, customs, personalities, and a thousand hidden irrationalisms. But by subjecting them to the test of facts, their "good" explanations—rationalizations—are unmasked and the relentless processes of erosion begin to operate.

The individual will not again be able to give "good" reasons for these prejudices and judgments. He may continue to hold them, but he knows they are factually indefensible, and that is an exceedingly uncomfortable state of mind, even for the untutored. Those ideas which do have an adequate factual foundation, however, will be strengthened by it.

*Bringing Purpose and Policy to the Test of Action*²

The movement of thought toward a decisive conclusion and program of action is the lash which makes judgments responsible and rigorous. As a result of their study of the facts and normative ideas in this case, the students could turn with new equipment to the shaping of rules and policies in race relations. They worked out a new "bill of rights" for Negroes, extending to them most, if not all, of those rights which they themselves enjoyed. They were able to choose more intelligently among the positions on the treatment of Negroes expressed at the outset of the unit and to come to a majority consensus about them. The right of the minority to formulate and to express its judgment was respected. But it was made clear wherein the majority considered the dissenting judgment factually in error and morally inadequate. The belief—so often expressed at the end of undisciplined discussion—that, after all, one opinion is as good as another was thus not left unchallenged.

In recent years teachers have been dogged by inhibitions preventing deliberate efforts to arrive at practical conclusions about questions of great social import. This has been due partly to the belief that not enough is known to warrant sound conclusions, partly to the fear of imposition, partly to the conviction that the objectivity of science requires impartiality at the point of programming and planning, and partly to the fear of special interest groups of one sort or another. The normative view does not admit these as legitimate reasons for the practice of stopping thought short of practical conclusions. It does not condone the practice of drawing conclusions from unexamined personal experiences and prejudices of either teacher or students, as is the case when thought is not pushed to a practical public conclusion and everyone is left to fall back upon his own unexamined convictions. •

² This unit is weak here. For a normative unit stronger at this point, see George Galloway *et al.*, *Planning for America*, pp. 417-420.

All that we have considered heretofore as belonging within the discipline of practical intelligence is indeed necessary, but unless conditioned to action it is of little worth. Ideals taught without regard to the conditions of their attainment may be little more than irresponsible moralizing. The study of facts divorced from personal and social values becomes meaningless and memoriter. The study and teaching of facts and ideals would become more responsible if commitment to a course of action were the final conclusion of the unit of instruction.

Content and Method in the Normative Unit

The students in this case have become conscious of the social-moral principles operating in themselves and in their community—principles of social equality, of economic opportunity, of political liberty, and the like. They have sought to clarify the meaning of these principles as these have bearing in race relations, and have learned to use them in formulating and judging racial policies and programs. These principles have taken on life and substance and are that much less shibboleths into which can be poured any sort of content to rationalize short-sighted and undemocratic policies and actions about race relations. In short, in this unit the students have been building into their personal characters the moral content of democratic culture. Their mastery of these great standards of judgment constitutes the heart of their discipline as democratic people.

The chief content of the normative unit is thus social-moral. It is the forms of knowledge and understanding which comprise the *common* sense of the people and arise out of the less specialized activities and experiences—religion, economics, government, etc. It consists of standards of conduct and beliefs created by generations of seers, sages, and common folk; norms and beliefs upon which the policies and choices of the people ultimately rest and by which they order their institutions and carry on their collective life. It is heavily weighted with judgments of value, with descriptive and explanatory judgments

playing an auxiliary role. This social-moral knowledge is the prime content of the normative unit. It is subject matter not solely to be learned; it is to be critically examined and often shaped into better forms. But it is the central object of attention. All else is contributory.

Normative subject matter is in the student as well as in the culture, having been induced into his personal structure from the culture, and he can no more be indifferent toward social norms and beliefs than toward his own existence. Hence, any consensus with respect to the issues of the unit will inescapably bear upon things to which the individual is committed. The completion of the unit will, therefore, require some commitment of each student. Neutrality and apathy are signs that the student's normative ideas have not been touched by the unit.

During the last twenty-five years, most departures in educational method have been better ways of inculcating descriptive principles, such as the laws of science, facts, such as place locations in geography, and skills, such as reading and arithmetical processes. This is to the good, and its importance can hardly be overstressed. The normative unit also makes wide use of facts, descriptive generalizations, and skills. But it is different from other kinds of units in one important respect. It requires that facts and descriptive principles be geared to the task of clarifying and reconstructing normative principles, to the formulation of social directions and programs of action. They are studied and learned in their social-moral role and not as ends in themselves.

The normative unit emphasizes those habits of thinking which facilitate the attainment of dynamic consensus. In units whose content is chiefly facts and descriptive principles, discipline may be developed in habits of thought related to the determination of the accuracy and sufficiency of facts and to the logical validity of descriptive generalizations. The normative unit, on the other hand, includes not only these habits but extends intellectual activities into such spheres as the social-moral orientation of oneself and others,

requiring that one become objective toward himself by conscious recognition and criticism of his own motives, aspirations, beliefs, and outlooks. Such a unit stresses the sympathetic recognition and valuation of opposing positions not only as proposed policies and courses of action but also as expressions of traditions and of the character of persons. The method of resolving moral conflicts within and among individuals and social groups is one of its central features.

In short, the normative unit gives discipline in the methods of practical thought and action. We saw the students acquiring ability to criticize social norms, both democratic and undemocratic, from the standpoint of factual support and of consistency with the great body of moral principles that comprise the democratic tradition. This means that they have been learning how to find facts, how to judge their accuracy and sufficiency as evidence of the dependability of social norms. We saw them developing the ability to seek consistency among social norms and to detect the lack of consistency in the ideals of other persons and social groups, not because consistency is the end of thought but because it is one of the essentials of the discipline which people must have in order to keep the moral tradition uncorrupted by rationalizations of special interests.

As a class works through unit after unit dealing with a variety of social-moral issues, the teacher helps them to abstract the method of practical intelligence and to become aware of its principles and techniques. This raises

discipline to the level of conscious purpose and control and makes it a generalized tool for attaining uncoerced consensus where community life is divided over significant issues.

Moreover, the students have been *learning to use language as an instrument of social understanding, control, and action*. They are learning, for example, that words such as "equality" and "opportunity" inhere not only in things or in social principles but also in the characters of persons. They are learning to use language as an instrument with which to uncover the hidden structure of personalities and the cultural context out of which these personalities speak. This again is an indispensable element of practical intelligence. Language in a democracy must be used not to beat down the opposition, as is the purpose of unprincipled propaganda, but to understand the opposition and to use whatever of worth it has to contribute to the construction of public policies and programs.

Finally, they are *learning to take social responsibility* not only through the clarification of social directions and standards of judgment but also because the unit requires a fusion of these directions and standards with the facts and descriptive principles into programs and plans of action. This discipline in constructive thinking about the future, this learning to make choices about the future in making plans and decisions now, this orientation to the future which normative units require is not the least of their contributions to the needed social discipline of these years.

SUMMARY

As we have previously pointed out, our society is in a period of transition from one system of social and political order to some other. Because we are not agreed on what the shape of our future as a society can and should be, uncertainty and conflict about the major ends and means of society are prominent features of contemporary experience.

As we have seen, this uncertainty about social purposes and policies is reflected in confusion and controversy about the aims and organization of education and of schools. Both professional educators and laymen are being forced by events, as well as by our

accumulating knowledge about men and societies, to reconsider and revise their opinions and beliefs about the social role of the school and about the organization and control of school systems. It is not surprising that a similar reconstruction of ideas and practices of teaching method—the ways in which teachers organize and conduct learning experiences with pupils—is also under way.

Teachers are concerned not only with the psychological effectiveness and the social motivation of the learning they seek to stimulate and guide in pupils. They are concerned also that the learning be *valid* learning, that the information acquired be accurate, that the ideas developed be sound, and that the values articulated be justifiable. Questions about the validity of learning are *logical* questions, not primarily psychological or sociological ones. Hence, teachers are concerned to ask whether the methods of study and instruction in which students are being habituated, the patterns of thinking they are, developing, are logically sound.

In devising and developing teaching methods, the teacher will find a major opportunity not only to assist his pupils to become intelligent, self-directing personalities but also to contribute to the contemporary task of social reintegration. And, since a major part of the learning of the school is likely to be focused on social problems, the methods he uses must include those appropriate to the intelligent study of social problems. This means, among other things, that teaching methods must incorporate the values inherent in both the scientific method and the democratic point of view. This incorporation requires sophistication concerning contemporary social confusion and controversy, the logic of factual evidence and of moral valuation, and, the building of a social organization in the school consistent with the required methodology. Further, it is not enough that the teacher be skilled in effective and valid methods of solving problems cooperatively. He must find ways of building this skill into the minds and characters of the pupils with whom he works.

In working at this dual task, embracing both intellectual method and pedagogical method, it is necessary to keep three vital points in mind.

1. Social problems always involve conflicts of interests, values, and perspectives, as well as differences over the facts of the case. Social problems cannot be studied adequately without a thorough investigation of the pertinent facts. But prejudices, values, and interests must also be examined and modified if study is to penetrate below the surface and to touch the real centers of choice and decision. Here, too, facts are essential—but facts directly related to the prejudices, values, interests, and perspectives of the members of the class. Are the values which seem to be operating in this controversy consistent with other deeply held values? In view of the consequences entailed by adopting this course of action, do we really want to espouse it? Only if questions of this kind are carefully and cooperatively examined will the study of social problems become effective either in the resolution of specific problems or in the mastery of the methodology of solving social problems.

2. Care in developing a friendly and cooperative atmosphere in the classroom is an essential condition of any adequate study of social problems. Since the study of such problems usually requires a re-examination of interests, values, and prejudices, it is at best a difficult and sometimes a painful process. The student must be helped to examine his own views critically and objectively. And, since man is a face-saving animal, this help must come from his fellow students as well as from the teacher. A significant part of the work of the skillful teacher, therefore, consists in building a social organization and atmosphere conducive to critical and objective study, even when emotions, interests, prejudices, and self-esteem are heavily implicated in the issue under examination.

3. The teacher should undertake neither to impose his own views on his pupils nor to adopt a *laissez-faire* attitude toward the outcome of the study. Discipline in the study of problems develops through strict adherence to the appropriate canons of intellectual method. In so far as possible, therefore, the teacher should insist that the pupil should reach his conclusions, whatever they may be, only after he has rigorously and scrupulously *studied* in accordance with those canons. The study of social problems requires full and free discussion. But it is a major mistake to assume that discussion, apart from study and apart from the proper methodological controls, is an adequate way of dealing with any problem.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. Formulate a social problem. Now formulate a problem about the physical world. Compare these two problems as to *a*) the nature of the difficulty to be overcome in solving each; *b*) the nature of the solutions; *c*) the justifications for the proposed solutions.

2. Which of the following are statements of fact and which are statements of value?

a) the table is 10 feet long; *b*) the table is beautiful; *c*) if an individual is to be successful as a clerk, he must conform to the rules of the store in which he works; *d*) the student should participate in the formulation of rules under which he is to work in the schoolroom; *e*) if the student participates in the formulation of the rules under which he works, he will be cooperative and orderly in his conduct; *f*) if a body displaces its own weight in the liquid into which it is put, it will float.

How can you tell which is which?

3. Give interpretations of the following educational topics that would be consistent with the meaning of democracy: *a*) handling of a controversial question; *b*) handling of an experiment in science; *c*) the control of students in the classroom; *d*) the methods of classroom instruction.

What interpretation of the topics above would be consistent with an authoritarian view?

4. What are the chief differences between the method of handling a social problem in the classroom and the method of dealing with other kinds of problems?

1. Perhaps the best single source of information on groups and their relationship to learning is *Human Relations in Curriculum Change*, edited by Kenneth D. Benne and Bozidar Muntyan; see especially Chapters 2, 3, and 7 in Part Two and Section C in Part Three. Two other references will be helpful in studying the effect of group situations on the learning process: the 1950 *Yearbook* of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, "Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools," Chapters 16 and 17, and the 1949 *Yearbook*, "Toward Better Teaching," *passim*.

2. The most fundamental theoretical treatment of social problems and the method of their solution is presented in *The Improvement of Practical Intelligence*, by R. Bruce Raup and others. Chapters VI, VII, X, and XI and Part III are most relevant.

3. The pattern of instructional units for dealing with social problems in the classroom is clearly laid out in *Fundamentals of Curriculum Development*, by B. Othanel Smith and others, Chapter 23. The application of certain logical concepts and principles to teaching in the social sphere is discussed in Harold Fawcett's *The Nature of Proof* and in *Teaching Critical Thinking in the Social Studies*, edited by Harold R. Anderson.



PART FIVE

Social Aspects of the Teaching Profession

Chapter 15. Organization, Functions, and Problems
of the Teaching Profession

A. M. Carr-Saunders • Abraham Flexner • William O. Stanley • T.
D. Martin • William O. Stanley • Ernest O. Melby • Kenneth D.
Benne • Robert Maynard Hutchins • Boyd H. Bode • Jesse H. New-
lon • National Education Association • Samuel P. Capen •
Kermit Eby • Jesse H. Newlon

Organization, Functions, and Problems of the Teaching Profession



The analyses of the contemporary social environment thus far presented have revealed many unfinished tasks for the people of America and of the world to perform. The tasks are baffling and complex. Some of them are urgent, and many of them are unprecedented, requiring re-evaluation of traditional ways of thought and conduct and the development of new ways. The very complexity, urgency, and unfamiliarity of the social tasks frequently make for confusion, conflict, irrationality, and irresponsibility in the minds of the people who are required somehow to perform them.

To develop minds that are more clear, less conflict-ridden, more rational, and more responsible in directing and carrying out the tasks which contemporary living requires is the general purpose of education. Some of the more specific issues which this general purpose raises for educational workers have been explored in earlier chapters. These explorations have so far focused for the most part upon two dimensions of the teaching role. One of these has to do with the relationships of the teacher to his students—and here questions of the aims, methods, content, and organization of instruction are central. The other emphasizes the relationships of the educational worker to his colleagues and to the public in directing and managing the school system in which he works—and here questions of educational policy, of administrative organization, of support and control are uppermost.



THE NEED FOR STRONG PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

The issues which focus in a third dimension of the teaching role have still to be explored. Here we think of the teacher as a member of an organized vocational group, of the educational worker in his affiliations with other educational workers, whether they teach in the same school system or not, of his professional associations in their internal and external relationships. Unfortunately, teacher-education programs have, up to the present time, devoted very little or no attention to this vital dimension of professional work. Consequently, most beginning teachers, and even many more experienced teachers, have not been aware of their obligations and responsibilities to the professional group. A considerable proportion of teachers, indeed, has apparently felt that vigorous cooperative action by teachers in the defense of their common interests is somehow beneath the dignity of the profession. The natural result has been that the teaching profession, compared to other occupational groups, has been weak and ineffective.

An industrial society, as Chapter 4 has indicated, is composed of a large number of specialized groups, each of which, because of its specific function, has its unique interests and point of view. The public policy in a complex, modern society inevitably grows out of this welter of diverse and sometimes conflicting group interests. In order to protect its own interests, therefore, every group must see that its voice is heard at the council table. But self-interest is not the only argument for effective group participation in the determination of public policy. Each of the major functional groups is responsible for the performance of some important task in society. Its interests include not simply the welfare of its members but also those conditions and policies required for the proper performance of its task. Hence, if the group is weak and ineffective, its work as well as the personal concerns of its members may suffer. Moreover, as Stanley argued in Chapter 4, the public interest is not something apart from the various group interests in society; it includes, as well as transcends, these partial and specialized concerns and perspectives.

Further, as Chapter 4 also suggested, effective action in modern society requires organization and disciplined cooperation. In small groups the individual, as such, can often participate effectively in the common council. But in the "great society" only the exceptional individual can make his voice heard. For most of us, successful participation, even at the local level, means participation through organized group action. Business and professional men, as well as organized labor, have recognized and acted on this fact. There is, for example, no more effective organization in the world when its legitimate interests are at stake than the American Medical Association. Today, for better or worse, we live in a world of large-scale group activity.

Like other occupational groups, teachers have common interests and collective responsibilities. Like other groups, also, they can protect these interests and discharge these responsibilities only through effective organized action on the part of all members of the profession. As one introductory textbook in education has expressed it, "In many ways, the quality of the work done by the teaching profession and the security of its members are influenced by the strength of its organization. Neither teachers nor the

children that depend upon them can afford the weakness and confusion which limit the efforts of a disorganized profession.”¹

INTERESTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROFESSION

Precisely because too many teachers—and teachers in training—have not recognized fully their obligation to the profession it may be well to review here some of the most important of these common interests and collective responsibilities.

As in the case of other groups, teachers have a legitimate interest in their financial rewards and economic security. Teaching has traditionally been an underpaid occupation. In comparative terms, this is even more true today than it has been in the recent past. Between 1940 and 1953-1954, the average annual salary of classroom teachers in the United States has increased from \$1,450 to \$3,605,² but, owing to the sharp increase in the price level during this same period, the increase in the purchasing power of teachers' salaries has been very slight—amounting to no more than \$59 a year, on the average, for elementary-school teachers in cities with populations of 100,000–500,000. Moreover, in 1940 the average salary for teachers exceeded the average salary for all employed persons in the United States by 12 percent. But since 1945 this relationship has been reversed, and today the wage of the average teacher is less than the average wage of all employed persons in the nation.

It should be noted that the professional concern with the salary level is not simply a selfish, private matter. Teachers harassed by financial worries or forced to take outside jobs to make ends meet cannot do their best work. And they cannot afford the study and travel which would enrich their teaching. Further, a low salary schedule makes it difficult if not impossible to attract able young people to the profession and to hold those that do enter it. Already, in the face of a severe teacher shortage that promises to become still more severe, thousands of trained teachers have quit teaching in order to earn an adequate living for their families. Finally, it cannot be said that the public cannot afford to pay higher salaries. In actual fact, the American people now devote a lower percentage of their income to education than they did during the Depression. In the interest of good schools, as well as of its own welfare, it is obvious that the educational profession must do a more effective job in presenting its case to the public.

Everyone who expects to make teaching a career has a very real stake in the achievement of full professional status for his occupation. Since the turn of the century, an increasing number of occupations, including that of the engineer, the realtor, and the mortician, as well as the teacher, have striven to attain the dignity and authority of a recognized profession. Teaching has been more successful in achieving this aspiration

¹ Gordon McCloskey, Zeno B. Katterle, and Delmar T. Ovjatt, *Introduction to Teaching in American Schools*, Harcourt, Brace, 1954, p. 316.

² The salary data in this section are taken from B. J. Chandler and Paul V. Petty, *Personnel Management in School Administration*, World Book, 1955, pp. 225-232.

than some of the other occupational groups, but it cannot as yet be said to have achieved the full and unquestioning recognition long accorded to doctors and lawyers. An important, although by no means the only, reason for this failure lies in the fact that teacher organizations have not sought or exercised the control over the training and professional conduct of teachers which the medical and bar associations have over the training and professional behavior of doctors and lawyers. Here, again, the attainment of a major goal depends, in part at least, upon stronger teacher organization.

The immediate drive behind the striving for professionalization is, of course, the prestige, authority, and autonomy which accompany full professional status. In the case of teachers, moreover, recognition as a profession in the plenary sense would undoubtedly result in higher salaries. But professionalization also means a higher standard of occupational training and achievement. Further, increased prestige would undoubtedly induce a larger group of able young men and women to adopt teaching as a career. In serving their own private interest in this respect, teachers could also serve the public interest.

Teachers have a collective obligation to provide the leadership required for the establishment of sound educational policies. By law, as well as in fact, the ultimate control of the public school is vested in the people, acting through their state government and the local school boards established by the authority of the state. Outside the realm of their own field of expertness, teachers cannot and should not dictate educational policy. The public, however, rarely formulates policies or collects and disseminates the facts upon which sound judgments must be made. Its function is that of choice and decision with respect to the policies presented to it. Leadership both in the formulation of policies and in the dissemination of pertinent knowledge and facts must come from some source. There are doubtless times when this leadership should properly be supplied by groups outside the profession, but as a general rule the public has the right to expect that the professional body charged with the conduct of the schools will exercise the office of educational statesmanship. Obviously, the professional interest will best be served by the acceptance of this obligation. But only a strong and united profession is capable of providing the necessary leadership.

BASIC LOYALTIES OF THE PROFESSION

Finally, every professional group has a set of unique interests and commitments growing out of its social function which it must seek to promote in society at large in order to perform adequately its professional function. In the case of the teaching profession, three of these unique interests are so pervasive and important that they may be said to define the fundamental loyalties of the profession.

1. There is the commitment to the democratic tradition, including the methodological procedures implicit in it. Again and again, outstanding educational leaders and the major educational organizations have declared that the primary loyalty of the American educational profession is the democratic ethic. Since the transcendent importance of the democratic tradition for education has been explored elsewhere in this book, it should

not be necessary to do more than mention it here. But it may be noted that an educational system premised on the democratic tradition is possible only in a democratic nation. Consequently, teachers as an organized group are necessarily concerned with the preservation and extension of democracy in society as well as in the school.

2. The educational profession, by the very nature of its task, is deeply concerned with the growth and development of children. This concern is not a matter of sentiment. As the responsible custodian of the institution which, after the family, has been charged by society with the nurture of the young, the educational profession is duty-bound to safeguard their interests and to promote their welfare. It is a trite but nevertheless a profoundly true statement that a nation's children are its future. Moreover, it is one of the most important ideals of the democratic tradition that every person shall have an equal chance to make the most of himself. More than on any other institution, the American people have relied on the public school to translate this ideal into a living fact. Further, as Chapter 7 has shown, the achievement of the ends of the school, even in such matters as the mastery of subject matter, is conditioned by the general well-being of the child. Hence, the educational profession is compelled to note, and where possible to change, every social condition or practice that adversely affects the wholesome growth and development of children.

3. By tradition and by necessity, the educational profession is devoted to the spirit and method of scholarship. The imparting of knowledge is not the principal end of education, but it is an indispensable end, without which the other ends are distorted and defeated. Knowledge has always been a primary concern of the educator. It is the basis for his expert authority. Without knowledge of the truth, and of the method by which it is attained, intelligent, self-directing personalities cannot be developed. The intimate relationship between democracy and the unhampered pursuit of tested truth has already been pointed out in the course of this book. It has, indeed, been recognized since the time of the founding fathers that "a wide diffusion of knowledge" is an essential condition of a society of free men. The ideal of truth and the scientific method is not, of course, exclusive to the educational profession. But, by the very nature of their craft, the educator and the scholar are devoted to that ideal; many would say that it is their first and primary loyalty. In the eloquent words of Charles A. Beard:

If truth is not easy to discover, if it is not always mighty, and often seems to fail rather than prevail, yet it has always been and still is the goal toward which the world's greatest thinkers have resolutely set their faces. To scholarship no other goal seems possible. Again and again in history, the truth rides over the set conventions of society. Society may say in a voice of thunder that the earth is flat and is immovable and may concentrate all the engines of authority on crushing those who believe otherwise; but the revelations of astronomy are not destroyed. Defeated in life, Galileo triumphs in death. Scholars must deal with ideas, facts, and opinions as stubborn as those which society imagines to be the ascendant realities of the present, and they must report what they find or keep silent.³

³ Charles A. Beard, *A Charter for the Social Sciences*, Scribner, 1932, pp. 4, 5.

If the supreme faith of the teacher is broader and more inclusive than the ideal of scholarship depicted by Professor Beard, it is, nevertheless, a faith that cannot be sustained unless it fully incorporates the spirit and the method of scholarship.

PUBLIC INTEREST IN A STRONG PROFESSION

The social tasks facing the American people and the people of the world are complex, urgent, and unprecedented. The intelligence with which they are able to perform these tasks is directly related to the quality and relevance of their education. In turn, the quality and relevance of this education depends upon the intelligence and effectiveness of those who direct and conduct our educational enterprises. Our educational leadership cannot be intelligent or effective without adequate professional organization. At present, the teaching profession is inadequately developed to discharge its grave responsibilities fully and adequately.

The development of a stronger teaching profession is no mere private concern of teachers and other educational workers. It is also a public concern, since the building of public intelligence for solving social problems requires a strong, secure, well-trained, and politically effective profession of teaching. The teacher who commits himself to building a better teaching profession serves not himself and his colleagues alone but the public as well.

The building of a strong profession requires knowledge as well as devotion and hard work. It is the hope of the editors that this chapter will contribute to a better understanding of the profession and of its problems. In studying the chapter, the student would do well to consider the following questions:

1. What are the distinguishing characteristics of a profession?
2. What are the major obstacles to the achievement of full professional status for teaching? Can these obstacles be removed? If so, how?
3. What are the responsibilities of the teaching profession in defending and advancing the interests of teaching and of education?
4. What responsibilities has the educational worker for supporting, maintaining, and strengthening the organized profession of which he is a part?
5. Should classroom teachers band together in organizations not open to the top administrative officials of the school? Should teachers affiliate with organized labor?

The readings in this chapter may be grouped into four sections. The first section, comprising Selections 105, 106, and 107, deals with the issue of professionalization. In this section Carr-Saunders and Flexner describe the nature and basic characteristics of a profession, and Stanley indicates some of the barriers to the achievement by the teaching group of full professional status.

The second section, including Selections 108 and 109, is concerned with the organization of educational workers. Selection 108, by Martin, names and describes briefly the most important teacher organizations in the United States. Selection 109, an excerpt from an unpublished manuscript by Stanley, attempts to outline the primary social functions of teacher organizations.

The third section, consisting of Selections 110, 111, and 112, explores three phases of the problem of professional autonomy. Melby and Benne, in Selection 110, discuss the nature and scope of professional autonomy, especially as it relates to the views and the pressures of other organized functional groups in American society. Selection 111, comprised of the work of three writers, examines three aspects of the problem of academic freedom as it relates to the autonomy and work of the educational profession. Selection 112, sets forth the code of ethics for the teaching profession adopted but not enforced by the National Education Association.

The final section, comprising the three excerpts included in Selection 113, debates—against the background of the entire chapter—the question as to whether or not teachers should affiliate with organized labor.

105 • *The Professions in Modern Society*

In Chapter 4, the proliferation of organized groups was noted as a distinctive feature of industrial society. Among these groups are organized interest groups made up of people specializing in the same kind of work. A profession is one such vocational association. What features does it have in common with other vocational associations—labor unions, chambers of commerce, trade associations, and the like? And what are the distinctive features of a professional association?

In order to find answers to these questions, it is well to look not at the teaching profession alone but at the whole panorama of professional groups which have taken shape within the past two centuries of Western history. The trend has been toward the professionalization of one vocation after another. The oldest professions—medicine, law, and the church—have been joined by other groups seeking and achieving, in some degree, recognition as professions—teachers, engineers, pharmacists, dentists, nurses, social workers, architects. And more recently, journalists, accountants and others.

What can we learn about the nature of a profession from examining this record of widening and deepening professionalization? One approach to an answer is historical. The historian seeks common motives, common conditions, common problems in his study of the life stories of diverse professions as they have emerged and developed. This is the approach that A. M. Carr-Saunders, perhaps the leading English student of the professions, has taken.

A little reflection shows that what we now call a profession emerges when a number of persons are found to be practicing a definite technique founded upon a specialized training. A profession may perhaps be defined as an occupation based upon specialized intellectual study and training, the purpose of which is to supply skilled service or advice to others for a definite fee or salary.

It is not difficult to account in general for the emergence of new professions. Large scale organization has favoured specialization. Specialized occupations have arisen round the application of the new scientific knowledge. Chemists and engineers have now long been included within the professional ranks. More interesting is the specialization which is arising round the technique of public administration and of business organization and control. It is in this latter field that the most important developments are now taking place. The story of the evolution of the professions is, however, an unwritten chapter in the social history of the last two centuries. No aspect of the matter has received the attention it deserves. This development of many new forms of specialized occupation has immensely increased the possibility of the use of human capacities which formerly for lack of opportunity remained dormant. Many specialized faculties which enable excellence to be achieved in the performance of some skilled service can now be exercised to the greatly increased satisfaction of their fortunate possessors and to the advantage of their fellows.

The history of the evolution of the professions brings a significant fact to light. As soon as a profession emerges, the practitioners are moved by the recognition of common interests to attempts to form a professional association. These attempts are by no means always immediately successful. It was long after dentistry had become a recognized profession

that the dentists succeeded in forming a strong organization. The engineers have been more fortunate. As the various branches of engineering have segregated out, those who practise them have been able to found what have proved to be enduring organizations. The varying fates of these first attempts would form an interesting subject for inquiry. What concerns us, however, is that these attempts are made in the early days of every profession, and so strong are the motives impelling practitioners to form professional associations, that they continue their efforts until success comes. Moreover, the tendency is towards the dominance of a single professional association in each profession. Some professions have never been troubled by the rivalry of associations. Where rivalry formerly existed, it is generally found either that one association has grown to overshadow all the others, or that amalgamation has taken place, as among the architects, or that associations, once in competition, have settled down to occupy what are in fact true subdivisions within the field of the profession, as is the case among the teachers and the accountants.

What then are the motives common to the members of every profession which lead to the formation of professional associations? I set aside the interest which professional men have in the subject-matter of their profession, not because it is not a powerful motive leading towards association, but because it is often satisfied by associations specially established for that purpose. What may be called pure subject associations are numerous. When professional associations attempt to satisfy the subject interest, that object may be regarded as incidental. Professional associations as such came into existence for other reasons. Of these the first is that, as a profession emerges, the better equipped among the practitioners realize that they possess a certain craft. They call themselves engineers, veterinary surgeons, architects, accountants, as the case may be. But the public does not accord them an exclusive right to that description. Not only

[From A. M. Carr-Saunders, *Professions, Their Organization and Place in Society*, Clarendon Press, 1928, pp. 5-9, 13-16, 18-20. Reprinted by permission of the publishers. Some footnotes omitted.]

may the poorly equipped call themselves by these titles and attain public recognition, but so also may those without any equipment whatever. The better equipped desire that they should somehow be distinguishable, and to that end they form associations, membership of which is confined to those possessing certain minimum qualifications. In the *Pharmaceutical Journal* for 1847—that is, six years after the foundation of the Pharmaceutical Society—this aspect of the matter is summed up in the following sentence: “The Pharmaceutical Society was designed as a means of raising the qualifications of pharmaceutical chemists and placing between them and unqualified persons a line of demarcation.”

Those associations which date from the first half of the last century were in their early days sometimes truly exclusive in the sense that they sought to exclude would-be members for reasons not strictly relevant to professional competence. Various devices were employed. But the exclusiveness of these bodies has been exaggerated. The members, it is true, desired to be recognized as forming the *élite* among the practitioners, and in general they justified their claim to be so regarded. Later the attitude of the members of these older associations underwent a change. They came to desire that all practitioners should possess at least the minimum qualifications admitting to the association, and that all practitioners should join the association. This has been the aim of the more recently formed associations from the beginning. With a few unimportant exceptions, professional associations can now be said to be exclusive only in the sense that they exclude the unqualified. They do indeed aim at obtaining for their members the exclusive patronage of clients and employers requiring the service of their craft. But with this aim is associated the ideal of including within their ranks all competent practitioners.

The qualified members of a profession are thus moved to form associations and mutually to guarantee their own competence. But this is not the only motive leading to association. Another motive is present from the beginning. Among the original objects of the Royal Institute of British Architects was “the

maintenance of a high standard of professional character and honourable practice.” The responsible members of a profession in fact desire to see a proper standard of professional conduct set up and maintained. Just as the qualified are not readily distinguished from the unqualified, so the scrupulous are not readily distinguished from the unscrupulous. Thus professional associations define and enforce rules of professional conduct. The members, in other words, mutually guarantee not only their competence but also their honour.

* * *

There is a third motive leading to the formation of professional associations. “To raise the status of the teaching profession” is one of the objects of the National Union of Teachers. The National Union of Teachers was founded in 1870. In the case of those associations which were founded earlier somewhat different language was employed. The preamble to the Charter granted to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in 1844 states that it has been represented that incorporation would “contribute to the respectability” of veterinary surgeons. Every profession in its early days has to fight for a proper recognition of its status. Newcomers among the professions are looked down upon by the established professions. The public has to be convinced that the practitioners of the new craft possess a technique founded upon an elaborate training and that equivalent services cannot be rendered by any untrained person who may offer to perform them at a lower price. The changes in status which have taken place, largely as a result of the efforts of professional associations, are sometimes forgotten. In 1873 a letter was sent from an English rectory announcing a vacancy for a schoolmistress and explaining the duties and conditions attaching to the post. The letter states among other things that the schoolmistress “lives in this house and takes her meals in the kitchen (we do not keep an indoor manservant).”¹ The salary offered for the post was \$25 a year. The connexion between status and remuneration is close, and in their efforts

¹ D. F. Thompson, *Professional Solidarity Among the Teachers of England*, p. 63.

to improve the status of their members professional associations have been led to pay attention to remuneration. "It is impossible," says the writer of a leading article in the *Proceedings of the Institute of Chemistry*, "to ignore the fact that the status of the professional man must be dependent upon the salary or fees which he receives. Therefore, as the Institute hopes to raise and maintain the status of the chemist, it must take the economic aspect into consideration."²

It is in respect of these attempts to raise the level of remuneration that professional associations most often receive adverse criticism. There is ample opportunity here for those who welcome opportunities for cynicism. In so far as these attempts are successful, the members receive personal financial benefit. It is thus easy to suggest that selfish motives are predominant. If a just conclusion is to be reached it must be remembered that the activities of the associations are restricted to raising the minimum remuneration to a certain level. There has been nothing in the nature of a deliberate sharing out of work. To the public there is free choice of practitioner. It is merely sought to ensure that, when a practitioner is engaged to perform a particular service, he shall not be paid less than a certain amount. Criticism sometimes takes the form of asserting that the minimum is set too high. It is notoriously difficult to come to any conclusion on such a matter as this. It seems likely that, while a careful and impartial inquiry might find a few cases in which professional associations had overreached themselves when attempting to fix minimum terms, in the main, having in view the long and expensive training required of a practitioner, the claims made have not been unreasonable in relation to remuneration in other occupations. At other times the objection is to any attempt at joint action by a professional association.

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But professional associations should not be condemned because they use collective bargaining. Collective bargaining is not merely

² *Proceedings of the Institute of Chemistry*, 1915, part ii.

inevitable; it is the only rational method of fixing the rate of remuneration and the only method which promises results that are just. They should not be condemned because their secretaries sometimes employ extravagant language when attempting to show an apathetic branch what the association is doing for the members. They should only be condemned if they use their power to extract terms that are unreasonable.

In order to improve the status of the professions, associations become engaged in public activities. But these activities, though having professional status primarily in view, result in an extended use of the services which the profession can render to society. It is only when the practitioners are recognized as belonging to a skilled and responsible profession that the public listens to their advice and gives them the authority to perform their functions in an adequate manner. It would be possible to show in general that the skilled service of those professions, where organization has been most successful in securing status, is more widely at the service of society than where organization is inefficient or relatively unsuccessful.

A survey of recent history thus reveals the emergence of many new professions. The movement continues to the present day. As professions emerge associations come into existence based upon the feeling of corporate responsibility for the competence and honour of all who hold themselves out as prepared to render these specialized services. Meanwhile the associations formed by the practitioners of the older professions have become assimilated as regards their aims to those found among the newer professions. The functions which these associations first perform are indirectly of great importance to society as a whole. Later they are led into public activities. Already they are important organs of society. There are reasons for supposing that, so far from these associations having grown to their full stature, we are witnessing merely the first steps in a movement which may play a large part in the society of the future.

It would perhaps be inadvisable to pass on to speculations as to what the future may have in store without some reference to the fact that, so far as professionalism attracts any attention to-day, it is usually the subject of very unfavourable comment. Professor Graham Wallas delights to dwell upon the shortcomings of professional men. A remark of one of his pupils may serve as an illustration of a view which is widely held. Mr. Robson, in a book recently published, incidentally refers to professional men as "imbued with that intense conservatism regarding their occupation, that disposition to regard with animosity new methods or a new point of view which is the normal expression of the professional instinct." These characteristics are supposed to be fostered by the formation of associations and to find expression in their activities.

The charges against professionalism seem to amount to this. Whatever may be the declared objects of professional associations, in actual practice conservatism of outlook as exemplified by animosity against new methods, selfishness as illustrated by exclusiveness and by interest in status and remuneration, and rigidity of practice as shown by professional etiquette are predominant. I do not suggest that these charges are without substance. I suggest that they are in the main based either upon misunderstanding or upon a perverse insistence upon what are undoubtedly defects. The nature of the defence against most of these charges has been indicated. A word may perhaps be said regarding the charge of

conservatism. There has been a bewilderingly rapid development in the practice of medicine, accountancy, engineering, and other professions in recent times. Could this have come about if "animosity against new methods" had been a fair description of the professional outlook? The charge is based upon a misunderstanding of the critical attitude towards suggested modifications and improvements of professional practice which is a characteristic of any well-defined and well-ordered profession. It is not necessary here to dwell upon the necessity for testing, sometimes as in the field of medicine in an apparently tedious and laborious fashion, what appear to be promising new methods, and to ensure, before employing them, not only that they are in themselves what they purport to be, but also that they accord with proved and established technique in allied fields and do not therefore in the long run accomplish more harm than good. That the public should misunderstand this so-called conservatism is inevitable. That responsible critics should speak of animosity to new methods as normal among professional men is less easy to understand. These misconceptions, as I hold them to be, of the true nature of professional organizations, are perhaps to be set down to the fact that, whereas industrial and commercial corporations are continuously under review, and associations of workpeople receive their full share of attention, professions and their activities are almost wholly neglected as objects of study. The material does not in fact exist upon which a sound judgment can be based.

106 • *The Earmarks of a Profession*

A second approach to the definition of a profession is based on the assumption, which seems to be empirically correct, that some professions have evolved further than others. As one studies the characteristics of the more highly evolved professions, he may formulate criteria of professional development. These represent, in some measure, an ideal-typical definition of "profession," but they suggest also the direction of developmental trends in the more highly developed professions and presumably in other professions as

well. As criteria of professional development are formulated, they can then be applied evaluatively in assessing how fully developed a specific profession is at any one time and also in suggesting lines of needed growth for that profession.

A number of years ago, in evaluating the profession of social work, Abraham Flexner formulated criteria of professional development. His criteria are by no means limited to the vocation of social work, however. With appropriate adaptations, they can be applied to any profession. (The results of their application to the current development of the teaching profession in America will be reported in Selection 107.) The late Dr. Flexner, a physician and a foundation executive, is best known for his penetrating criticisms of higher education in America and was a keen student of the professions.

To make a profession in the genuine sense, something more than a mere claim or an academic degree is needed. There are certain objective standards that can be formulated.

In this narrower and eulogistic sense, what are the earmarks of a profession?

One has, of course, no right to be arbitrary, notional, or unhistorical. The nature of a profession has undergone a readily traceable development, and the number of professions has not remained stationary. Occupations that were once non-professional have evolved into full professional status. These changes will continue to go on. The definition that we may formulate to-day will therefore need recasting from time to time, and internal modifications will occur in many of the activities that we shall mention. My present concern, however, is not to consider the evolutionary aspects of the problem, but rather to ask what are at this moment the criteria of a profession and to consider whether social work conforms to them. There are a few professions universally admitted to be such,—law, medicine, and preaching. From these one must by analysis extract the criteria with which, at least, one must begin the characterization of professions. As we proceed, we shall consider

how far the conception has been widened or modified by the addition of new professions; and finally, to what extent social work measures up to the standard thus reached.

Would it not be fair to mention as the first mark of a profession that the activities involved are essentially intellectual in character? Manual work is not necessarily excluded; the use of tools is not necessarily excluded. The physician is not the less a member of a profession because his fingers feel a pulse and his hands sound a patient's chest; the engineer is not the less a member of a profession because he employs instruments and tools. But in neither of these instances does the activity derive its essential character from its instruments. The instrument is an incident or an accident; the real character of the activity is the thinking process. A free, resourceful, and unhampered intelligence applied to problems and seeking to understand and master them—that is in the first instance characteristic of a profession.

Wherever intelligence plays thus freely, the responsibility of the practitioner is at once large and personal. The problems to be dealt with are complicated; the facilities at hand, more or less abundant and various; the agent—physician, engineer, or preacher—exercises a very large discretion as to what he shall do.

[From Abraham Flexner, "Is Social Work a Profession?", a paper presented at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, in Baltimore, Maryland, May 12-19, 1915. Used by permission of the National Conference of Social Work.]

He is not under orders; though he be cooperating with others, the work is team work rather than individual work; his responsibility is not less complete and not less personal. This quality of responsibility follows from the fact that professions are intellectual in character; for in all intellectual operations, the thinker takes upon himself a risk. If then intellectuality with consequent personal responsibility be regarded as one criterion of a profession, no merely instrumental or mechanical activity can fairly lay claim to professional rank; for the human mind does not, in instrumental or mechanical activities, enjoy the requisite freedom of scope or carry the requisite burden of personal responsibility. The execution or application of a thought-out technique—be it crude or exquisite, physical or mental—is, after all, routine. Some one back of the routine has done the thinking and therefore bears the responsibility, and he alone deserves to be considered professional.

We are accustomed to speak of the learned professions. What is the significance of the word *learned* in this connection? Does it imply that there are unlearned as well as learned professions? I suspect not, for the intellectual character of professional activity involves the working up of ideas into practice, involves the derivation of raw material from one realm or another of the learned world. Professions would fall short of attaining intellectuality if they employed mainly or even largely knowledge and experience that is generally accessible—if they drew, that is, only on the usually available sources of information. They need to resort to the laboratory and the seminar for a constantly fresh supply of facts; and it is the steady stream of ideas, emanating from these sources, which keeps professions from degenerating into mere routine, from losing their intellectual and responsible character. The second criterion of the profession is therefore its learned character, and this characteristic is so essential that the adjective *learned* really adds nothing to the noun *profession*.

Professions are therefore intellectual and learned; they are in the next place definitely practical. No profession can be merely academic and theoretic; the professional man

must have an absolutely definite and practical object. His processes are essentially intellectual; his raw material is derived from the world of learning; thereupon he must do with it a clean-cut, concrete task. All the activities about the professional quality of which we should at once agree are not only intellectual and learned, but definite in purpose. The professions of law, medicine, architecture, and engineering, for example, operate within definite fields and strive towards objects capable of clear, unambiguous, and concrete formulation. Physicians rely mainly on certain definite sciences—*anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, etc.*—and apply these to the preservation and restoration of health. Architecture relies on mathematics, physics, etc., and applies these to the designing and construction of buildings. Ends may of course be concrete and practical without being physical or tangible. University professors, engaged in teaching, in the training of teachers, in the increase of knowledge or the development of thought, stand the tests that we have thus far enumerated: their work is intellectual, learned in quality, and definitely practical in object.

Each of the unmistakable professions already mentioned for the purpose of illustration possesses a technique capable of communication through an orderly and highly specialized educational discipline. Despite differences of opinion about details, the members of a given profession are pretty well agreed as to the specific objects that the profession seeks to fulfill, and the specific kinds of skill that the practitioner of the profession must master in order to attain the object in question. On this basis, men arrive at an understanding as to the amount and quality of training, general and special, which should precede admission into the professional school; as to the content and length of the professional course. These formulations are meant to exclude from professions those incapable of pursuing them in a large, free, and responsible way; and to make sure that those potentially capable are so instructed as to get the fullest possible benefit from the training provided.

A profession is a brotherhood—almost, if

the word could be purified of its invidious implications, a caste. Professional activities are so definite, so absorbing in interest, so rich in duties and responsibilities, that they completely engage their votaries. The social and personal lives of professional men and of their families thus tend to organize around a professional nucleus. A strong class consciousness soon develops. But though externally somewhat aristocratic in form, professions are, properly taken, highly democratic institutions. They do indeed tend to set up certain requirements for matriculation, so to speak; but democracy, I take it, means not the annihilation of distinctions, but rather the abrogation of gratuitous and arbitrary distinctions. If membership in a profession were conditioned on some qualification not essentially related to the activities involved—on birth or wealth or some other accident—professions could be fairly charged with being snobbish or aristocratic; but if qualifications are determined by the nature of the responsibility alone, and if membership depends solely on satisfying terms thus arrived at, then professions must be adjudged thoroughly democratic in essence.

There is, of course, always danger that the interests of an organization may conflict with those of the body politic. Organizations of physicians, lawyers, and teachers may find the personal interests of the individuals of whom they are composed arrayed against those of society at large. On the whole, however, organized groups of this kind are, under democratic conditions, apt to be more responsive

to public interest than are unorganized and isolated individuals. In any event, under the pressure of public opinion, professional groups have more and more tended to view themselves as organs contrived for the achievement of social ends rather than as bodies formed to stand together for the assertion of rights or the protection of interests and principles. I do not wish to be understood as saying that this development is as yet by any means complete. Such is far from being the case. Organizations of teachers, doctors, and lawyers are still apt to look out, first of all, for "number one." But as time goes on it may very well come to be a mark of professional character that the professional organization is explicitly and admittedly meant for the advancement of the common social interest through the professional organization. Devotion to well-being is thus more and more likely to become an accepted mark of professional activity; and as this development proceeds, the pecuniary interest of the individual practitioner of a given profession is apt to yield gradually before an increasing realization of responsibility to a larger end.

Let me now review briefly the six criteria which we have mentioned; professions involve essentially intellectual operations with large individual responsibility; they derive their raw material from science and learning; this material they work up to a practical and definite end; they possess an educationally communicable technique; they tend to self-organization; they are becoming increasingly altruistic in motivation.

107 • Barriers to the Professionalization of Teachers

Against the background of the preceding selections, an assessment of the current strengths and limitations of the American teaching profession is possible. William O. Stanley has attempted such an assessment and has gone on to raise two questions: What stands

[From William O. Stanley, "Obstacles to Full Professional Status," unpublished class lecture.]

between the current status of teaching and its further development as a profession? What blocks and limitations must be overcome to permit teacher organizations to discharge more adequately their social responsibilities?

Has teaching in the United States become, in the true sense of the term, a profession? The answer, of course, is that in some degree it has been so recognized. But it must be admitted that the teaching group has a long way to go before it can claim the full measure of professionalization already achieved by both the lawyers and the doctors. More to the point, there would now appear to be at least nine major hurdles or blockages which must be overcome before the teaching body can attain full professional status.

1. There is in American education a powerful craft mentality which holds that successful teaching is a matter of practical skill which can, and should, be acquired apart from a rigorous discipline in a systematic body of educational theory. Indeed, there is, within the educational profession, a widespread contempt for, and distrust of, basic theoretical analysis and study. Yet, as previous discussions have made clear, the possession of an organized body of basic theory which cannot be mastered without intensive study, is an essential characteristic of any profession. Moreover, in the present case, two distinct bodies of theory must be learned before the requirements of professional status can be satisfied. In the first place, the teaching field professed by a given teacher, if it is a legitimate object of study, typically embodies a significant set of theoretical principles which must be known before they can be taught. It is possible to criticize the traditional subject-matter organization of the public school curriculum. But no defensible organization of the curriculum will eliminate either organized subject-matter of some kind or the requirement that a professionally trained teacher must be disciplined in the theoretical principles underlying his teaching field. And, in the second place, the members of the educational profession must be disciplined in the theoretical principles re-

lating to such matters as the organization of the public school, the definition of its aims and purposes, the nature of the learning process, and the laws governing the growth and development of children, as well as the interest and concern underlying the rights and obligations of the teaching profession—in short, the entire range of theory and knowledge properly falling within the domain of the professional student of pedagogy.

2. As a result of a combination of historical circumstances, the teacher now occupies a relatively low social status in American society. It is true that the young teacher often finds many of the more cultured and "substantial" homes in the community open to him; a fact that is not unrelated to yet another significant obstacle to the attainment of full professional status. Nevertheless, in a very genuine sense, the teacher, as an individual or as a group, does not enjoy the prestige or the influence accorded to law, engineering, medicine, or business. On the contrary, teachers are typically regarded, at best, as inexperienced young persons or as impractical idealists, ill-equipped to deal with the substantial realities of the world of affairs. Hence their voice often carries but little weight in the community.

3. Teaching has frequently been regarded, by the public, and by a large number of teachers, as a stop-gap between graduation from school and entrance upon a permanent career. Young men have used teaching to earn the money required to continue their education in some other profession, to buy a farm or to enter business. Young women, particularly from the lower middle class, have embarked upon teaching as a temporary job preceding marriage and as a means of meeting, under favorable circumstances, young men of upper middle or upper class status.

4. The teaching profession does not at the present time command financial rewards com-

parable to those which attend success in business, agriculture or in the other professions. Indeed, it is doubtful whether teachers' salaries in many communities are on a level with the wages paid to certain types of unskilled labor. Certainly there is no doubt that skilled labor, where it is adequately organized, generally receives a higher remuneration than that accorded to the vast majority of teachers.

5. For a variety of reasons the standards of professional training required to enter the teaching profession are comparatively low. Obviously the cultivation of the minds and the character of children is as important and as difficult as the supervision of their physical health. It must be admitted that, at the present time, the knowledge and skill related to teaching are not as certain or as well established as those pertinent to the practice of medicine. But they are fully as extensive; and, whatever their defects, they are immeasurably superior to the unexamined assumptions and notions which, in the absence of thorough professional training, frequently govern educational practice. At a minimum, an adequate professional training for teachers would require four years of general education in an established institution of collegiate rank, followed by three years of professional training in a recognized professional school and one year of internship. Obviously, a teacher training program of this order is not immediately practicable. But it may be safely predicted that teaching will not achieve a professional status comparable to that now enjoyed by medicine and law until some such program is adopted.

6. The teaching profession is, unfortunately, segmented both horizontally and vertically. Horizontally, the profession is divided into specialized groups representing the various subject-matter departments. Vertically, it is further divided into elementary, secondary, and collegiate levels, accompanied by invidious distinctions in prestige and financial reward. Moreover, vertical segmentation is further complicated by professional splitting, at each of these levels, into administrative and teaching groups with differing degrees of status and authority. In a very genuine sense,

all of these distinctions represent proper and necessary divisions of function. In the absence of a common orientation to the educational task, however, these differentiations in function have often degenerated into narrow vested interests with limited and distorted views of the over-all job of education, and into unfortunate and harmful cleavages in status and authority. Naturally this condition has seriously hampered the development of professional unity.

7. The work of the educational profession is constantly conducted in the midst of a conflicting network of social, economic and political pressures exerted, directly and indirectly, by a multitude of organized interest groups in American society. For the most part, these groups are the authentic voice of large and significant segments of the American people, and, as such, they do have a legitimate place in the determination of the ends and purposes of education. Nevertheless it is true that, taken separately, each of these groups represents only a particular segment of the public interest. And, unfortunately, it is also true, that in the tug of practical politics many of these groups often operate as relatively narrow and selfish pressure groups seeking to shape the program of the school in accordance with interests and views of their own particular group. Consequently, at the present time, it must be admitted that these pressures constitute a major barrier to the full professionalization of teaching in American society. The removal of this barrier, moreover, will require, first, the growth of a powerful and determined professional organization, armed with a defensible policy for dealing with such pressures, and, second, the development of adequate methods and machinery of inter-group deliberation capable of molding the partial interests cherished by each of these groups into a responsible public interest representative of the entire community.

8. There are still in many American communities—although less so than was formerly the case—severe restrictions on the personal freedom of teachers which are not ordinarily imposed upon other adult members of the community. In these communities manners,

dress, personal habits, social contacts and morals are subject to strict supervision in accordance with a rigid code which applies to no one else except, perhaps, ministers and their families. Moreover, teachers are often expected to refrain from normal political activity. Consequently many able and ambitious young people have felt uncomfortable and cramped in this narrow social and educational environment.

9. Finally, the professionalization of teaching has been gravely retarded by the absence of a powerful, effective professional organization. There is no lack of educational organizations—indeed part of the difficulty may be traced to the fact that there are too many separate organizations. But many American teachers are not members of any of these organizations. Moreover, membership in educational organizations is often largely formal and perfunctory, with little sense of participation or commitment. Despite these handicaps

teacher organizations have become more effective in recent years. But the fact remains that the teaching profession does not have a single, powerful organization, responsible to all of the members of the profession, and equipped with a clear vision of its professional task. There is an obvious lack of professional discipline and unity among American teachers that has hampered the development of an effective professional organization comparable to the American Bar Association, the American Medical Association or the stronger labor unions. Moreover, many school administrators have not fully faced the question as to whether they are the representatives of the school board or members of the teaching body. Doubtless there are other reasons for the relative ineffectiveness of professional organizations of American teachers. But until these difficulties have been resolved, the attainment of full professional status by the teaching group in American society is impossible.

108 • How the American Teaching Profession Is Organized

Following Stanley's evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching profession today an examination of how teachers are actually organized is in order. The picture is a complex one, reflecting various dimensions of differences within the teaching population—sectional, racial, subject matter taught, ideology, age of pupils taught, and the like—as well as the common interests of the entire teaching group. T. D. Martin—a National Education Association official selected, because of his special knowledge of teachers' organizations, to write this article for the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*—gives an authentic, though brief, description of American (and world) teachers' organizations as of 1950.

The terms "teachers' associations" and "educational associations" are practically synonymous in educational literature and are often

used interchangeably to designate organizations consisting primarily of teachers and other workers in the field of education whose

[From T. D. Martin, in Walter S. Monroe (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (rev. ed.) pp. 1442-1446. Copyright 1950, by The Macmillan Company, publishers, and used with their permission.]

general purpose is to promote the cause of education.

The Brethren of the Common Life, founded in Europe during the latter part of the fourteenth century, is commonly credited with being the first voluntary teachers' association. Numerous similar organizations came into existence during the Middle Ages. However, these were primarily religious, both in origin and motive, and, while they may be properly considered as the beginnings of voluntary teachers' associations, they differed materially from the more or less professional organizations of teachers which have now developed in leading civilized countries.

The first teachers' association in the United States was the Society of Associated Teachers organized in New York City in 1794. Other early significant associations were: American Institute of Instruction, established in Boston in 1830; Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers, organized in Cincinnati in 1829; and National Teachers' Association, organized in Philadelphia in 1857 (later the National Education Association).

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, teachers' organizations in the United States have multiplied rapidly and become both more definite in purpose and more permanent in form. The *Educational Directory*, published annually by the United States Office of Education, lists approximately 500 national and regional associations and more than 100 state organizations. Local associations have become so numerous that no effort has been made to include them in this directory or even to count them. Nearly 2500 are affiliated with the National Education Association.

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

Local teachers' associations are the oldest, the most varied in character, and the most numerous in the United States. . . . They exist not only in practically every city but also in many rural districts. While these local associations vary considerably in purpose and form, most of them follow certain more or less definite patterns. In 1930 Hoffman . . . found 340 local teachers' associations in 58

cities of more than 100,000 population. The 176 organizations which replied to his inquiry consisted of 46 city-wide associations admitting practically all groups in the school system; 29 subject-matter associations; 26 principal-supervisory associations; 21 high-school teachers' associations; 7 schoolmasters' clubs; and 47 of miscellaneous character.

The ultimate objectives of such local groups, as of practically all teachers' associations, may be said to be the advancement of the interests of the teaching profession and the promotion of the cause of education. Local associations differ primarily in membership regulations, organic setup, and emphasis on specific objectives. Some of the city-wide associations operate as pure democracies, with all members entitled to attend and participate in the meetings of the organization. Others have a representative democracy, with a board of delegates made up of official representatives from different groups. The activities of these associations cover a wide field, frequently including professional improvement, teacher welfare . . . research . . . interpretation of the schools . . . community service, and recreation.

In most of the states local associations serve as units of the state organization and therefore play a dual role, functioning in the solution of local problems and serving as the medium through which the teachers of the group participate in the broader programs of the state and national associations. . . . The committees of local units frequently parallel those of the state and national associations and cooperate with these in the assembling of information and in the dissemination of facts. . . .

STATE ASSOCIATIONS

The first state teachers' associations were organized in 1845 in Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. By 1856 seventeen state associations had been formed. During the next ten years five more were organized, and before the end of the century practically every state had its own teachers' association. . . .

Membership in state associations is usually state-wide, with few qualifications. Thirty specify that members shall be engaged in education while eight include all interested in joining. Thirteen of the Southern states have separate state associations for colored teachers. . . . Membership in state associations was comparatively small prior to the appointment of full-time secretaries. It grew from 65,993, less than 14 per cent of the teachers employed in the nation, in 1907, to 436,392, approximately 62 per cent of the teachers employed, by 1923 . . . ; and in 1947 it was 755,740, or 85 per cent of the teachers of the country. . . .

In their early years most state associations functioned as pure democracies. All members who attended the annual conventions were eligible to vote for officers and to participate in the transaction of other business. This procedure has been largely replaced by representative assemblies to which delegates are sent from local or regional units. . . .

Prior to the modernization movement, which began about 1910, most state associations held an annual state convention for their membership, but distance, cost, and lack of auditorium facilities prevented many members from attending. Many of the states have now set up sectional convention districts covering an area large enough to bring together an inspiring group and yet small enough to include all members. The programs of these conventions vary from talks on subjects of nation-wide interest to highly specialized round-table conferences.

The activities of state associations vary considerably. However, they usually include conventions, publications, legislation, research, field service, public relations, teacher welfare, reading circles, library and magazine service, national cooperation, and membership recruiting. . . . Members of state associations, as in local associations, are usually divided into groups according to subject-matter taught or position in the school system. These departments conduct programs according to their special interests. . . .

Forty-seven of the state associations now publish a journal which contains news of the

association's activities and articles of general professional interest. Several publish supplementary legislative bulletins, research reports, and public-relations pamphlets. The legislative work of state associations has become increasingly significant and is one of the most important means by which educational conditions have been improved in the different states.

The outstanding feature of the reorganization movement in state teachers' associations was the provision for a full-time executive secretary and a salaried staff. California employed the first full-time secretary in 1909. . . . Six states followed its example during the next decade, and at the present time 44 states and Hawaii have full-time executive secretaries and staffs of from 2 to 17 employees. . . . Nineteen of the state associations own their office buildings. . . . Dues range from one dollar to one half of one per cent of the annual salary. The unified dues plan, by which dues are collected by the local associations for local, state, and national associations, is growing in favor.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The National Education Association of the United States is the largest professional organization in the world. It traces its beginning back to the National Teachers' Association, which was organized in Philadelphia in 1857 by 43 educational leaders representing 12 state associations and the District of Columbia. The inclusion of the word "teachers" in the title was probably significant in that it distinguished it from other current education associations which were dominated largely by administrators, friends of education, college professors, supporters of the classics, and other educational statesmen of that time. . . .

In 1870 the National Association of School Superintendents, organized originally in 1865, and the American Normal School Association, organized in 1858, were merged with the National Teachers Association under the name National Educational Association, and the organization became an all-inclusive association

and advocates adequate salaries and pensions, smaller teacher load, effective tenure regulations, sabbatical leave, and academic freedom. It also advocates improved professional standards, modern curriculums and methods as well as federal aid for education, and abolition of war . . . *The American Teacher* was founded in 1912 by a group of teachers in New York City and became the official organ of the Federation in 1918.

The advisability of teachers becoming affiliated with labor has been widely discussed both within and outside the profession. . . . The metropolitan press has been particularly vigorous in its opposition to union affiliation of teachers. . . . The arguments usually offered in favor of their affiliation include the points of view that alliance with organized labor strengthens the position of the teaching profession and, therefore, furthers the cause of education, and that teachers as American citizens have a right to join such organizations as they wish. . . . Those who are opposed to teachers joining the American Federation of Teachers argue that education is a public service and that since teachers are public employees they should not ally themselves officially with any particular social or economic group . . . , that they can accomplish their objectives equally well by developing their own professional organizations . . . and that by so doing they will contribute more effectively to the development of teaching as a real profession. . . .

The problem of teacher strikes has been one with which the Federation has constantly struggled. Officials of the American Federation of Labor have allowed teachers' unions exemption from the use of this normal technique of organized labor . . . and at the 1947 convention of the American Federation of Teachers the official, thirty-year, no-strike policy of the Federation was reaffirmed . . .

CIO TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS

The United Public Workers of America has jurisdiction in the field of teacher organizations for the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The UPW was formed April 1946 by

a merger of the United Federal Workers of America and the State, County, and Municipal Workers of America. It maintains a national Teacher Division which services and coordinates the work of teacher locals. The UPW claims a membership of 100,000, of which 20,000 are said to be teachers. CIO local teacher unions emphasize the necessity of collaboration of all teacher organizations and attempt to achieve unified working relations.

While the CIO recognizes that most teachers have the right to strike, they encourage them to use every effort to improve school and working conditions without resort to this method. They recognize also that teachers in federal employment, and in certain states, are forbidden by law to strike.

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

This association was organized in San Francisco in 1923, at a conference called by leaders of the National Education Association. Six hundred representatives from 50 countries attended this conference. . . . Prior to World War II the Federation held a biennial worldwide convention with regional conferences in the intervening years. The primary purpose of these conventions and conferences was to bring together teachers from different countries in order that they might become acquainted with one another and exchange information about their countries and educational systems. During World War II the Federation was not able to hold its usual conventions and conferences, and since that time it has had difficulty in carrying on its program because of lack of funds.

In August of 1946 the National Education Association of the United States of America arranged a conference at Endicott, New York, to which the national educational organizations of the various nations of the world were invited to send delegates. Numerous plans for the development of a world educational organization were given careful consideration, and out of this conference grew the World Organization of the Teaching Profession. . . .

THE WORLD ORGANIZATION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION (WOTP)

This organization, as indicated above, was conceived at Endicott, New York, in August 1946 during a conference of educators representing teacher associations in 28 different countries. Called by the National Education Association of the United States of America, this conference brought together 56 delegates from 38 national educational associations and observer-advisers from 9 professional and intergovernmental organizations concerned with education, including the United States Department of State and the United States Office of Education. . . .

The chief purposes of the conference were to mobilize the teachers of the world for a continuing battle against the dangers to freedom and peace and to establish an effective world educational organization to solidify the gains made in the teaching profession during the past quarter of a century and to improve existing standards.

A tentative constitution for a World Organization of the Teaching Profession was drawn up, unanimously approved by the conference and signed by each of the delegates as

a token of his faith in its basic principles. This constitution was presented to the various organizations represented at the conference and was adopted by the delegates to the first meeting of the WOTP Delegate Assembly at Glasgow, Scotland, in August 1947. . . .

The Endicott Conference also prepared a "Document on Transitional Arrangements" which provided for a Preparatory Commission of 5 members empowered to take the necessary preliminary steps in setting up the new organization.

The purposes of the WOTP as stated in its constitution are: (*a*) to make the highest standards of full and free education available to all without discrimination; (*b*) to improve the professional status of the teachers of the world and to promote their intellectual, material, social, and civic interests and rights; (*c*) to promote world-wide peace through the building of good will founded upon cooperation between nations in educational enterprises, based upon pertinent and accurate information; (*d*) to advise the appropriate organs of the United Nations and of other international bodies on educational and professional matters.

109 • Social Functions of Teacher Organizations

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the teachers as an organized professional group requires a formulation of the social functions which teacher organizations are expected to fulfill. Any statement of these functions is bound to reflect a diagnosis of the current state of American society and of the needs of that society. This is true of William O. Stanley's attempt to identify the social functions of the teaching profession. Yet it would be difficult to object to his analysis of the major roles of the profession; however much teachers may differ as to the more specific policies and programs through which these roles should be performed.

It requires but little argument to show that a professional group cannot intelligently order its affairs without taking into account its professional functions and interests. An analysis of the behavior of any well defined professional group will reveal that it acts in at least two basic roles. In the first role, it discharges the social office or task which constitutes it as a group. In the second, it acts to guard and advance the professional interest. Both of these functions and roles, of course, are subject to further analysis. To the first function, of course, may be assigned the research and the scholarly study required to increase the body of knowledge and theory which forms the basis of the expert authority of the profession and which enables it to perform the duties of the social office assigned to it.

In the present connection, however, the primary concern lies in the examination of the second basic function of the professional group. Generally speaking, this function entails four distinct tasks. First, every recognized and well defined professional group undertakes to safeguard the ethical code and the standards of performance established by the profession against the encroachments or intrusions of outsiders as well as against the misconduct of incompetent or unethical members of the profession. Second, it acts in the capacity of a trade union, promoting the financial and, in the more narrow sense, the other occupational interests of the members of the profession. Third, it endeavors to secure the activities and institutions associated with the exercise of its professional office from any lack of support or interference which would lower the prestige of the profession or hamper it in the performance of its professional duties. Fourth, wherever it can, the professional group tries to prevent or alter conditions and conduct in society that are seriously inimical to the success of its professional activities.

Professional bodies, of course, frequently assume a narrow and exclusive attitude in their effort to attain these objectives. Yet a

careful look at the objectives themselves will disclose that in every case they are intimately connected with the capacity of the professional group to exercise, successfully and well, its essential social office. Even the trade union function, as any experienced teacher can testify, has a definite bearing at more than one point on the quality of the work which the members of the profession are able to perform. A professional group may abuse its power. But it is also true that if the tasks constituting the second professional function are not adequately performed the public as well as the profession will usually suffer.

American teachers, although much less consistently and effectively than lawyers or doctors, have engaged in all four of these tasks. But the educational profession has never analyzed clearly its professional functions, nor have its members typically recognized the full extent of their professional obligations. As a result all of the tasks involved in the second basic function of a professional group have been inadequately performed; often seriously so. Teachers' organizations, for example, have never undertaken, as a professional body, to determine and enforce the standards of competence, and of professional integrity, which should be required of all members of the teaching profession—with the inevitable result that the profession has been confronted with a multitude of loyalty oaths and restrictions imposed upon teachers by agencies outside the profession. The trade union activities of teacher organizations, likewise, have been so ineffective that, *in relative terms*, the economic position of the American teacher has steadily declined in recent years.

But, perhaps, the most glaring inadequacy will be found in the area defined by the fourth task. Many educators, in fact, have insisted that the educational profession must not take a position with respect to social conditions and practices that are demonstrably inimical to the achievement of acknowledged educational objectives. In part, of course, this insistence simply reflects a reluctance to engage

[From William O. Stanley, "Educational Policies and Citizens' Organizations in an Age of Confusion," unpublished manuscript. Reprinted by permission.]

in serious social controversy. But in large part it also represents a failure to distinguish clearly between the different roles in which the profession acts. Hence the doctrine that teachers must not indoctrinate their students is translated into the thesis that the profession, in its adult relationships, must not take a definite stand on current social issues. Yet, as various parts of this study have indicated, both the objectives of public education and the interests of the teaching profession are, to an extraordinary degree, at stake in many of the most important of these issues.

The basic interests implicit in the professional association as such have been noted in the preceding analysis of the professional function. . . . The educational profession shares these interests. Every professional group, however, has a set of unique interests growing out of the particular nature of its social office. In the case of the teaching profession, three of these unique interests are so pervasive and important that they may be said to define the fundamental loyalties of the profession. First, there is the commitment to the democratic tradition, including the methodological character implicit in it. . . . Second, the educational profession, by the very nature of its task, is deeply concerned with the growth and development of children. . . . Third, the teaching profession, by tradition and by necessity, is devoted to the spirit and the method of scholarship. . . . These basic loyalties—the commitment to the democratic tradition, the concern for the welfare of children and the devotion to the spirit and method of scholarship—together with the educators' legitimate desire to protect the prestige and integrity of his profession, define the fundamental interests which must be reflected in any policy adopted by the profession to guide the strategy and conduct of its professional organizations. Ultimately every profession is responsible to society for the way in which it performs its social office. Within a broad framework of social control, however, almost every profession has sought—and, in the case of the more established professions, has obtained—a large degree of professional autonomy. This tendency has appeared in ed-

ucation, although, with the exception of the right of academic freedom, the claim for professional autonomy has so far been made primarily in support of the authority of the school administrator. In general, the present writer believes that the trend towards responsible professional autonomy is sound; and he would argue, also, that properly interpreted, the grant of professional autonomy should be extended to the teaching profession as a whole. But, at one crucial point, there is a significant difference between the social office of the educator and that exercised by other professional bodies. Fundamentally, the claim for autonomy rests upon the possession of expert knowledge. In most professions, the field of its expert knowledge almost exactly coincides with the dimensions of its social office. But in the case of the teacher, as previous discussions have indicated, his most important tasks (the formation of character) fall outside the domain of his expert knowledge. Consequently a distinction must be made between the pedagogical (or moral) and the expert authority of the educator. . . .

Within the limits of his expert authority the educator should be granted the same autonomy extended to the other professions, and it is, accordingly, a legitimate object of professional policy to secure it. No claim for autonomy, however, can justly be made in the area of pedagogical authority. On the other hand . . . the educational profession does have the right, and the obligation, to exert a certain vigilance and leadership in the processes by which the ends and purposes of public education are shaped. In the exercise of this right the profession must take into account both its professional interests and the kind of educational program which, in its judgment, is required in order to enable the public school to perform its essential functions. In part . . . the profession must safeguard these concerns by direct advocacy and appropriate political action. But, in no small degree, the profession will best promote both its program and its interests, by insuring that so far as possible basic educational decisions are made by the mature and informed judgment of the entire community.



110 • Professional Autonomy and Lay-Professional Cooperation

As both Carr-Saunders and Flexner have asserted, the growth of professions reflects the accumulation of specialized knowledge which has accompanied the development of modern sciences and the application of scientific knowledge to the solution of practical problems. The authority of members of a profession rests upon the expertness they have developed in their field of applied knowledge. Members of the medical profession have authority because they have become expert in the diagnosing and treating of disease. Members of the teaching profession have authority because they have acquired expertness in directing and guiding learning experiences.

As the expertness of a professional group increases, the *relative ignorance* of other members of society about their specialty also increases. How can laymen intelligently make public policy to control the conduct of doctors in health matters when the doctors know so much more about health than laymen do? And how can laymen intelligently make policies for directing educational institutions when teachers know much more about educational processes than laymen do? If men generally are to reap the advantages of professional expertness for the public good, general authority must somehow respect the specialized, expert authority of the professionals.

For the effective exercise of their expert authority, freedom and autonomy for the professions are necessary. Yet somehow the public must be protected from the irresponsible exercise of authority by specialized professions and professionals. This whole question of professional freedom and of its proper limitations is an important practical problem in today's world, nowhere more important than in the area of free and responsible teaching.

In some large measure, the question of teachers' freedom to teach reduces itself to a question of how much autonomy qualified members of the teaching profession should have in planning and carrying through the programs of education for which they are responsible. Certainly, a teacher's professional judgment needs to be respected in educational matters primarily because of his expertness. He has studied and presumably mastered knowledges and skills relevant to at least some limited area of educational practice. On the other hand, his expertness does not qualify him to determine fully the goals and controlling values of education. These goals and values actually reflect, as we have seen, larger social purposes and standards, and, in a democratic society, it is ideally the responsibility of *all* the people to determine the purposes of their society.

This democratic conviction, along with vigorous pressures from various organized groups to share in policy decisions about education (if not to dominate these decisions), has led educators recently to supplement the traditional representative processes of boards

[From Ernest O. Melby and Kenneth Benne, "The Need for a New Conception of Educational Control," in the Sixth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, *Mobilizing Educational Resources* (Ernest O. Melby, ed.), Harper and Bros., Publishers, 1943, pp. 29-33.]

of education by bringing parents and other citizens more directly into processes of educational deliberation and decision. Citizens' councils on education, parent representatives on curriculum committees, and parent-teacher associations represent some of the forms of extended lay participation in educational affairs. Yet injudicious inclusion of laymen in educational policy-making and evaluation may actually jeopardize the autonomy and freedom of the teaching profession.

In the following selection, Ernest O. Melby, an experienced educational administrator, and Kenneth D. Benne, a student of the philosophy of education and of group dynamics, have attempted to formulate principles which safeguard both the interest of the public in setting directions for the school program and the autonomy of members of the teaching profession in the exercise of its professional functions.

We have stressed the importance of widening the participation by lay persons and groups in formulating and supporting an educational policy appropriate to the world situation which democratic nations are facing today. We have emphasized especially the desirability of bringing democratic forces, now in some large degree excluded, into the processes of educational planning at national, state, and local levels. We have recognized that lay representatives would work along with representatives of the teaching profession in refashioning existing educational policies. But we have yet to emphasize the great importance of strong and forward-looking leadership by the teaching profession in all processes of educational planning. Education involves both a science and an art. An increasing body of knowledge, skill, technique, and method has grown up around the practices of education. Persons engaged in educational work must have adequate mastery of the science and art of education, if educational work is to be carried on efficiently and well.

Professional work not only involves the mastery of a more or less specialized science and art. It is concerned with the social use of these specialized abilities. An adequate public health program could be formulated only with the help of able and enlightened members of the medical profession. But it requires

equally the help of representatives of the "lay public" which is ultimately to receive the benefits of the program. Lay people are often more sensitive to public health needs, to inequities in the existing public health program, and to the "political strategy" of getting a more effective program into operation than are the members of the medical profession. Thus cooperation among lay and professional representatives is crucially required in working out any adequate health program.

Such an argument applies with even greater force to the making of educational policy. When education is seen as the deliberate shaping of the characters and attitudes of a people toward the wide range of issues and problems faced by a people, the interest of all groups of the lay public in what purposes the educational program serves is seen at once to be central and crucial. What social, political, and economic decisions our people make tomorrow are vitally affected by the educational influences that play upon them today. Thus the representation of all responsible lay interests is essential in the making and support of adequate educational policies. But it is equally true that educational policy will tend to be blind and uninformed if those who have seriously studied the science and art of education and who are actually engaged in education as a life career do not co-operate in the same process, usually in a position of leadership.

Furthermore, once a broad policy of education is established for a nation, a state, or a locality, its execution must necessarily be entrusted to professional persons. And such persons, so long as they work within the spirit of the educational policy, must be given a large degree of autonomy in determining the most efficient means—materials and methods of instruction, organization of instructional processes, and so on—for carrying that policy into execution. We realize that no sharp line can be drawn between the making of a policy and its execution. Certainly lay review of the results of any program, as carried through professionally, is both inevitable and desirable. But, until professional educators are given substantial autonomy in carrying out educational policies and implementing educational purposes which have been agreed upon, the full body of significant findings of recent educational study and research will not be put actively to use in the public service.

In brief, professional educators should participate and lead in the processes of lay-professional co-operation by which educational policies and purposes are established, evaluated, and reviewed. Moreover they should be given substantial autonomy in carrying out and implementing established educational purposes and policies.

The history of American education has been marked by confusion with respect to professional and lay responsibility in educational control. The profession of education was slow to develop. Historically the layman has held sway in the control of education. School visitors, supervisors, board members have been laymen. In many cases, these laymen not only have made educational policies but have examined pupils and judged the outcomes of education. With the development of a better educated teaching profession, the layman has become less active. As a member of a board of education, he has often insisted on choosing teachers, determining textbooks to be used, and otherwise invading the proper domain of autonomous professional knowledge and activity. But educators have become jealous of their professional responsibilities and spheres of influence and have re-

sisted the efforts of school boards to assume unwarranted lay control. By 1929 the pendulum had swung from the almost complete control by laymen which was characteristic of education in the early 1800's to a substantial internal control by professional workers.

But the depression brought new problems to education as to other areas of our common life. Finances were limited and board members began to wrestle with what were truly professional issues, under the guise of educational "economy." Junior high schools were often eliminated, art and music were dropped from the curriculum by action of the lay board. Teachers were often dismissed by board members and replaced with others whose personal and political connections with the board members were closer. It seems clear that, since 1929, superintendents of schools and teachers have lost influence and school board members and laymen generally have gained greater control over educational policy and procedure. It also seems clear that this swing back to lay control has been accompanied by lowered educational efficiency, deteriorated professional morale, and increased political influence in the educational program.

It does no good to bewail the educational mistakes of the past. But it is important to ask how adequate professional leadership in planning and adequate professional autonomy in carrying through a total educational program can be attained in the future. Without attempting to oversimplify the problems involved, we believe that the development of a united, vigorous and forward-looking organization of teachers on national, state, and local levels is an indispensable part of any adequate solution. We have noted that any group interest gains articulation and clarity of viewpoint as well as power only as it is organized. Teachers will gain a common and clear vision of their professional task only as they are organized. They will attain professional solidarity and power only through organization. Without such solidarity and power, the voice of professional educators will be heard only

faintly in the councils of educational boards and of legislatures and the Congress when questions of educational policy are being discussed and settled. In our day, when a national program of education is taking shape, it is essential that united professional action

be attained at the national level. Only thus will the proper balance between lay and professional responsibility in educational control be struck—directly at the national level and indirectly in the decentralized units of educational control.

III • Academic Freedom and the Educational Profession

Academic freedom is undoubtedly the most important, as well as the most controversial and misunderstood, aspect of professional autonomy for teachers. In its simplest terms academic freedom means right of the scholar to publish and teach the truth as he sees it. But there is always a danger in oversimplifying difficult and controversial issues. Academic freedom implies discipline as well as freedom. It is not the right of the teacher to say whatever he pleases in the classroom. It is rather the right of the scholar to place before his students the results of disciplined study and research and to explore with students, in the same disciplined fashion, crucial issues about which there is, as yet, no consensus.

Moreover, academic freedom is not primarily a privilege claimed by teachers for their own benefit. On the contrary, the claim for freedom of teaching rests, first of all, on the right of the student to study and learn without evasion, hypocrisy or deceit. At rock bottom the claim for academic freedom is grounded in the need of a democratic society for an intelligent, informed citizenship and in the right of the individual to have free access to all opinions and all of the facts in making up his own mind. Thus, there is an intimate connection between academic freedom and freedom of thought and conscience in society itself.

Eventually, major decisions about freedom of teaching, as about other educational issues, are made by the public, or at least by the most influential and powerful segments of it. But the educational profession, committed as it is to a free learning environment for students, has a vital stake in the way the issue is decided.

The selection on this topic consists of three parts. In the first, Robert Maynard Hutchins—former chancellor of the University of Chicago and a leading figure in the Ford Foundation's Fund for the defense of the Republic—stresses the importance of academic freedom and indicates its relationship to the democratic tradition. The second part, written by Boyd H. Bode, a noted philosopher of education passionately devoted to freedom of study and inquiry, undertakes to state the fundamental purpose and meaning of academic freedom. In the final part, Jesse H. Newlon stresses the duties and responsibilities of the educational profession in the defense of academic freedom. Dr. Newlon was superintendent of schools of Denver, Colorado, and subsequently professor of educa-

tional administration at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is best known for his work in the social and political dimensions of educational administration.

Academic Freedom and the American Way

We hear on every side that the American Way of Life is in danger. I think it is. I also think that many of those who talk the loudest about the dangers to the American Way of Life have no idea what it is and consequently no idea what the dangers are that it is in.

You would suppose, to listen to these people, that the American Way of Life consisted in unanimous tribal self-adoration. Down with criticism; down with protests; down with unpopular opinions; down with independent thought. Yet the history and tradition of our country make it perfectly plain that the essence of the American Way of Life is its hospitality to criticism, protest, unpopular opinions, and independent thought. A few dates like 1620, 1776, and 1848 are enough to remind us of the motives and attitudes of our ancestors. The great American virtue was courage.

We ought to be afraid of some things. We ought to be afraid of being stupid and unjust. We are told that we must be afraid of Russia, yet we are busily engaged in adopting the most stupid and unjust of the ideas prevalent in Russia, and are doing so in the name of Americanism. The worst Russian ideas are the police state, the abolition of freedom of speech, thought, and association, and the notion that the individual exists for the state. These ideas are the basis of the cleavage between East and West.

Yet every day in this country men and women are being deprived of their livelihood, or at least their reputation, by unsubstantiated charges. These charges are then treated as facts in further charges against their relatives or associates. We do not throw people into

jail because they are alleged to differ with the official dogma. We throw them out of work and do our best to create the impression that they are subversive and hence dangerous, not only to the state, but also to everybody who comes near them.

The result is that every public servant must try to remember every tea party his wife has gone to in the past ten years and endeavor to recall what representatives of which foreign powers she may have met on these occasions. A professor cannot take a position on any public question without looking into the background of everybody who may be taking the same position on the same question. If he finds that any person who is taking the same position on this question has been charged with taking an unpopular position on another question, the professor had better not take any position on this question, or he may be hailed before some committee to explain himself.

II

Is this the American Way of Life? The great American word is freedom, and, in particular, freedom of thought, speech, and assembly. Asserting the dignity of man, and of every man, America has proclaimed and protected the freedom to differ. Each man is supposed to think for himself. The sum of the thoughts of all is the wisdom of the community. Difference, disagreement, discussion decided by democratic processes are required to bring out the best in the citizens. America has grown strong on criticism. It would be quite as consistent with the American Way

[From Robert Maynard Hutchins, "What Price Freedom?" *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, 35 (Summer 1949): 211-215. Reprinted by permission.]

of Life to offer prizes for the most penetrating criticism of our country as it would be to offer prizes to those who have done the best job of advertising it.

The heart of Americanism is independent thought. The cloak-and-stiletto work that is now going on will not merely mean that many persons will suffer for acts that they did not commit, or for acts that were legal when committed, or for no acts at all. Far worse is the end result, which will be that critics, even of the mildest sort, will be frightened into silence. Stupidity and injustice will go unchallenged because no one will dare to speak against them. To persecute people into conformity by the nonlegal methods popular today is little better than doing it by purges and pogroms. The dreadful unanimity of tribal self-adoration was characteristic of a Nazi state. It is sedulously fostered in Russia. It is to the last degree un-American.

American education has not been constructed on such un-American principles. In general, the practice has been to give the student the facts, to try to help him learn to think, and to urge him to reach his own conclusions. It is not surprising that the heart of American education is the same as that of Americanism: it is independent thought. American education has not tried to produce indoctrinated automatons, but individuals who can think, and who will think always for themselves. The basic principle of American government, and one that accounts for the importance of education in this country, is that if the citizens learn to think and if they will think for themselves, the Republic is secure. The basic principle of the Russian dictatorship is that the people cannot think or cannot be trusted to think for themselves.

The American doctrine rests on the proposition that it is the individual in himself that counts. It is not who his father was, or how much money he has, or what his color or creed is, or what his party is, or who his friends are, but who and what he is. So the test of a teacher is whether he is competent. The professional competence of a teacher is hardly a question on which lay bodies, or even administrators or trustees, would wish

to pass without the advice of persons professionally competent in the teacher's field.

Teachers may be expected to obey the law of the land. But it is still permissible, I hope, to ask whether a law is wise. To discriminate against teachers—to act as though they were all disloyal—and to put them under special legal disabilities seems injudicious if we want able, independent men to go into the teaching profession.

III

The assumption appears to be that American education is full of Reds, an assumption that is the precise reverse of the truth.

To require oaths of loyalty from all because of the eccentricity of an infinitesimal minority is an unnecessary and derogatory act. And of course it will not effect any useful purpose; for teachers who are disloyal will certainly be dishonest; they will not shrink from a little perjury.

The way to fight ideas is to show that you have better ideas. No idea is any good unless it is good in a crisis. You demonstrate the failure of your ideas if, when the crisis comes, you abandon them or lose faith in them or get confused about them to the point of forgetting what they are. The American idea is freedom. Freedom necessarily implies that the "status quo" may come under the criticism of those who think it can be improved. The American idea is that the state exists for its citizens and that change in society must occur to meet their developing needs. The whole theory of our form of government is a theory of peaceful change. Many of the changes that Marx and Engels demand in the Communist Manifesto have taken place in this country, and they have taken place without communism, without dictatorship, and without revolution, thus disproving, incidentally, one of the central theses of Marx and Engels, that such things cannot be accom-

plished without communism, dictatorship, and revolution.

These reflections on the Communist Manifesto lead me to say that labeling some thing or some man communist because communists happen to favor it or agree with him, that easy process by which one disposes of different views by applying a dirty name to them, involves the negation of thought of any kind. If it had been applied consistently in American history it would have deprived us of some ideas and some men that we are proud to think characteristically American. For example, the Communist Manifesto demands free education for all. Are we therefore to recant, and denounce the American doctrine of free education for all?

We are now in the midst of a cold war. We must protect ourselves against external enemies, their representatives in this country, and any citizens who may be conspiring to overthrow or betray the government. But the statute books are already filled with laws directed to these ends. It has never been shown

that there are so many spies or traitors in this country, or that the external danger is so great and imminent that we have to divert the entire attention of our people into one great repressive preoccupation, into one great counterrevolution in which the freedoms of our citizens must be thrown overboard as too burdensome for the floundering ship of state to carry.

How is the educated man to show the fruits of his education in times like these? He must do it by showing that he can and will think for himself. He must keep his head, and use it. He must never push other people around, nor acquiesce when he sees it done. He must struggle to retain the perspective and the sense of proportion that his studies have given him and decline to be carried away by waves of hysteria. He must be prepared to pay the penalty of unpopularity. He must hold fast to his faith in freedom. He must insist that freedom is the chief glory of mankind and that to repress it is in effect to repress the human spirit.

The Meaning of Academic Freedom

Underlying the whole question of freedom in the schools is a basic issue which requires careful attention. The issue is whether or not the schools should be expected to protect certain beliefs at all costs. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the obligation of the schools to furnish such protection has ordinarily been taken for granted. The beliefs in question may be theological or political or social in character, but in any case they are commonly regarded as being entitled to preferred status, and so it becomes the business

of the schools to see that they retain their privileged character. These beliefs are "absolutes" and can claim immunity from destructive criticism. In other words, it is the business of the schools to get these beliefs accepted. Within limits these beliefs may, indeed, require reinterpretation as time goes on, yet this does not alter the fact that the chief concern of the schools is with inculcation, with the fixing of certain prescribed beliefs. Perhaps the reaction against such intellectual and spiritual tyranny is the chief reason for

[From Boyd H. Bode "What Is the Meaning of Freedom in Education?" in Harold B. Alberty and Boyd H. Bode (eds.), *Educational Freedom and Democracy*, Second Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1938, pp. 8-17. Used by permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.]

the view that the right and the duty to set the pattern belong, not to an outside authority, but to the teacher.

It does not follow, of course, that either view is correct. To prescribe what people are to believe, is in essence, the principle of dictatorship. In a dictatorship the schools have furnished to them a sketch or blue-print of what is officially regarded as an ideal social order. This social order may have as its purpose the elimination of the profit motive, or the glory of empire, or the glory of race, or what not, but, in any case, it sets a pattern for belief and conduct, and conformity to the pattern is rigidly enforced. In other words, education becomes a means for developing the younger generation according to a predetermined model. The essential feature of this scheme is not changed by being practised on a smaller scale, as in the case of pressure groups, or by being entrusted to a teacher, and it is not changed by the claim that it is a means of preserving or promoting democracy. The spirit in any case is not democratic but "authoritarian," and the pattern is set by people who happen to be in a position to do so.

There is a third alternative. As was said previously, human nature is not fixed. It is developed by means of social relationships, through which the individual acquires language and the capacity for conceptual thinking, and through which he achieves moral, social, religious, and other predispositions and insights. Accordingly, it is plausible to suppose that the purpose of education is to bring him into conformity with certain selected patterns and that these patterns have a certain absolute authority and sanctity. From a democratic point of view, however, they were evolved from certain give-and-take relationships. The whole idea of the "social" implies mutual recognition of interests, with corresponding obligations. In this mutual recognition each individual finds an avenue for the development of his capacities. The patterns which happen to be evolved in any given society derive their justification from the fact that they serve as instrumentalities for maintaining and promoting reciprocal relations, or

common interests among men. Democracy thus opens up a new road to the question of social organization and to the question of freedom in the schools. With respect to social organization, it holds that all existing forms of organization should be held subject to modification whenever such modification will further the continuous extension of common interests and purposes. With respect to education, it rejects the idea that the schools should assume any direct responsibility for the acceptance of specific beliefs, since the inculcation of beliefs tends to result, if not in fanaticism, at any rate in intolerance and the closed mind. It emphasizes the need of examining our cultural heritage for two reasons: first, such examination leads to a clearer recognition of the nature and range of the interests that are involved in the confusion of patterns; and, secondly, it affords an opportunity to show that for democracy there is a higher obligation than the protection of any specific patterns for belief and conduct. Freedom in a democratic school system, then, means the right to carry through a program of this kind.

From this point of view it is not difficult to see why democracy places so much emphasis on the method of discussion, conference, and agreement. If the procedure is genuinely democratic, the participants achieve a wider view of the subject in hand; the quest for an acceptable solution becomes an attempt to harmonize, as far as possible, all the divergent interests; and the final outcome is a heightened sense that the mutual recognition of interests and the adjustment of conflicting values are of major importance. If these results are achieved, errors in decisions become less serious because a disposition has been cultivated which makes it possible to correct these errors. The method is all important because it has an educational quality, which is to say that democracy is primarily concerned with the development of the individual that results from the democratic procedure.

The purpose of this extended discussion is to lead up to the conclusion that an intelli-

gent consideration of freedom in the schools requires a decision on the issue that has been raised. Are there beliefs which should receive preferred status? If so, the question of freedom is settled, at least in principle. The schools will then be expected to operate within the limits set by these beliefs. The question that still remains, in that case, is how these beliefs are to be selected in a social order which professes to be democratic, and how the enforcement of an official creed is to be differentiated from the spirit and method of a dictatorship. If we reject the claim to preferred status, the question of freedom shapes up differently. The schools in that case have no right to insist on the adoption of any specific belief; the right to independent judgment on the part of the pupil or student must be scrupulously respected. But the schools do have the right and the obligation to make the school population intelligent about the concept of democracy, on the ground that what a democracy is most in need of being intelligent about is its own meaning.

To promote an understanding, then, of what is meant by *democracy* becomes the major responsibility of the schools. In terms of our previous discussion, this understanding requires emancipation from the bondage of traditional beliefs and modes of thinking, in so far as these rest on a basis of authority. It may be repeated, however, that the purpose of developing the issue between authoritarianism and democracy must not be to gain recruits for democracy, but rather to enable pupils to make an intelligent choice. The choice cannot be intelligent as long as there is no realization that democracy can be had only at the price of extensive reconstruction of conventional beliefs and practices. The whole movement of modern civilization, including the development of the natural sciences, the social sciences, political and industrial relations, art and literature, has embedded in it the ubiquitous issue of authoritarianism *versus* democracy. A school program designed to bring this issue out into the open is a vital necessity to a nation that is concerned to preserve and clarify its tradition of democracy.

Freedom in the schools, then, means the

right of the school to do its appropriate work.

* * *

Since the transmission of racial and national heritage inevitably calls for interpretation, it seems reasonably obvious that there are and can be no neutrals in education. Perhaps the most unedifying spectacle in present-day education is the persistent and fatuous attempt to avoid the whole issue by a specious claim of neutrality.

To remain on the fence comes to mean that we are indifferent to moral and spiritual values. A teacher who believes in democracy does not pretend to be detached and indifferent. If he is honest and discerning, he will recognize his personal bias and undertake to assume responsibility for it.

This leads into another question. If there are no neutrals in education, is the difference between the two kinds of teachers [democratic and authoritarian] as great as has been made to appear? Every teacher has his own pet beliefs which he seeks to promote. Why not be candid, then, and admit that all education is indoctrination?

For present purposes it is unnecessary to go into an extended argument as to what constitutes indoctrination. It is sufficient to recognize that there are certain similarities in all teaching and also certain important differences. Every teacher with real convictions is in a certain sense an advocate of those convictions, no matter how painstakingly he may try to be fair and impartial. His method of conducting classes and organizing his work is inescapably affected by these convictions. So far there is similarity. The differences emerge when we consider the values which the teacher is concerned to protect and promote. Authoritarianism places these values in the acceptance of certain habits for the guidance of belief and conduct. Democracy stresses the importance of keeping intelligence free for the continuous remaking of beliefs. The justification for this emphasis is the conviction that intelligence should function as a means of the "abundant life" and not as a

means to the discovery of eternal and immutable truth. The underlying philosophies are far apart. One seeks deliberately to keep intelligence in leading strings; the other seeks to set it free.

This conception of freedom is held, not primarily in the interest of the teacher, but in the interest of the pupil. The school population of today will be the responsible citizens of tomorrow. To them will fall the task of remaking traditional attitudes and practices which have so amply demonstrated their inadequacy to present-day circumstances and which, because of this inadequacy, threaten our civilization with disaster. The best preparation that the schools can provide for this task is to promote the free exercise of intelligence, in order that they may have a chance to avert the danger and the wretchedness which the short-sightedness and inflexibility of the present generation have brought upon the world.

What is to be especially noted is that this demand for freedom in the schools is tied up with the obligation resting on the schools to

liberate intelligence for the task of reconstructing the ideals of conduct. It does not mean that the teacher has at all times the right to say what he pleases. His freedom of speech in the classroom is limited to whatever is necessary or appropriate to stimulate pupils to the endeavor to reinterpret their basic beliefs. What will serve this purpose cannot be determined in advance. Outside of the classroom the same general principle applies. The only valid test for a teacher's conduct is whether, under the given circumstances, it promotes authoritarianism or democracy. Such a test is obviously difficult to apply. Speech or conduct or activities which are acceptable in one community may be a source of needless offense in another, and thus become an obstruction to the work of the teacher and of the school. There is a sense in which the teacher, like St. Paul, must be all things to all men. But—again like St. Paul—the teacher must never surrender his loyalty to his gospel, which is the gospel of democracy, to the demands of timidity or of a narrow expediency.

The Responsibility of the Profession for the Defense of Freedom of Teaching

The primary responsibility for the maintenance of freedom of teaching must, in the complexities of contemporary American life, rest upon the teachers themselves. This is true for the simple reason that they should be more sensitive to the importance of freedom for the schools and should have a better understanding of the role of education in the democratic process than any other group in society. The only possible exceptions are those students and practitioners of politics who are themselves sincere believers in democracy. In a period in which there are so many battles to

be fought, teachers must rely on themselves. They cannot hang back waiting for the lay public to carry the battle for freedom of teaching.

It is impossible here to attempt any thorough-going discussion of strategy for the maintenance of this freedom. Certain essential elements in such a strategy are, however, perfectly apparent and may be briefly summarized.

1. The first step must be to bring the great body of teachers to a realization of the

[From Jesse H. Newlon, "Freedom of Teaching," in William H. Kilpatrick (ed.), *The Teacher and Society*, First Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1937, pp. 276-278. Used by permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.]

crucial importance of the problem. Teachers as a group seem to be neither well-informed with respect to the social situation nor sensitive to its critical character. *The most serious danger in the situation is the apathy of the major portion of the teaching profession itself.* This danger will be removed only when teachers become students of education in its deeper social relationships. Only an informed profession can be alert to the threat to freedom of teaching.

2. The public must be educated as to the meaning of the attack being made on education and on freedom of teaching, on the one hand, by certain uninformed but well-intentioned people and on the other by really sinister forces in our society. Large sections of the public are likely to be misled by fascist-minded "patriots," by jingo nationalists, and by propagandists for special interests. Fortunately important elements among the people are sensitive to the dangers that threaten. . . .

3. Freedom of teaching must be vigorously defended by local, state, and national educational organizations, and to this end such professional organizations must be made more effective. Actual defense of teachers whose tenure is threatened because of their exercise of the right of freedom of teaching is highly educative both to the public and to the great body of teachers.

4. If freedom of teaching is finally to be made secure, a militant all-inclusive organization of teachers is essential. Local associations, state associations, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Progressive Education Association—these and all other teach-

ers' organizations should be federated for joint and unified action to advance and protect the deepest interests of education.

In connection with the foregoing it should be emphasized that freedom of teaching is a problem not only for teachers of the social studies, but for teachers in fields generally regarded as relatively non-controversial. That it should be a Harvard professor of geology who spoke out most emphatically against the teachers' oath law in the state of Massachusetts is highly significant. Two generations ago it was in the field of the sciences that freedom of teaching was a critical issue."

It is of basic importance that the political character of this problem be understood. For at bottom the issue of freedom *is political* in the deepest and truest sense of that word. The democratic state is dedicated to freedom. Freedom of speech, freedom of teaching, freedom to study and to criticize existing conditions are its very foundations. The groups and the forces in society that are striving to limit freedom of teaching are the forces that are striving to control the machinery of the state for the protection and the furthering of their own private interests. Only the political state has power to protect our freedom against these forces. Teachers must, therefore, work cooperatively with other groups in the state who hold freedom dear; together they must insure, through the ballot box, that those who are placed in control of the machinery of the state, whether legislative, administrative, or judicial, are those who will employ this machinery for the protection of the basic liberties guaranteed under the Constitution to the American people.

112 • A Code of Ethics for the Teaching Profession

As professions develop, they assume more and more autonomous control of the conduct of their members in their professional roles, always within some larger framework of legal and moral control. If professional control is not to be arbitrary, some code of professional conduct needs to be developed—a code which is understood and accepted by the members of the profession upon whose conduct it is binding. Professions, therefore, evolve codes of ethics and ways of enforcing their codes upon members. There is no single professional association at present which includes all American teachers as members. There is therefore no single self-imposed code of ethics applicable to all teachers. The National Education Association comes much closer, however, than any other professional group to incorporating all American teachers in its membership. Its code of ethics is, as a result, more widely recognized and more influential than any other so far as American teachers are concerned.

We, the members of the National Education Association of the United States, hold these truths to be self-evident—

—that the primary purpose of education in the United States is to develop citizens who will safeguard, strengthen, and improve the democracy obtained thru a representative government;

—that the achievement of effective democracy in all aspects of American life and the maintenance of our national ideals depend upon making acceptable educational opportunities available to all;

—that the quality of education reflects the ideals, motives, preparation, and conduct of the members of the teaching profession;

—that whoever chooses teaching as a career assumes the obligation to conduct himself in accordance with the ideals of the profession.

As a guide for the teaching profession, the members of the National Education Association have adopted this code of professional ethics. Since all teachers should be members

of a united profession, the basic principles herein enumerated apply to all persons engaged in the professional aspects of education—elementary, secondary, and collegiate.

FIRST PRINCIPLE: The primary obligation of the teaching profession is to guide children, youth, and adults in the pursuit of knowledge and skills, to prepare them in the ways of democracy, and to help them to become happy, useful, self-supporting citizens. The ultimate strength of the nation lies in the social responsibility, economic competence, and moral strength of the individual American.

In fulfilling the obligations of this first principle the teacher will—

1. Deal justly and impartially with students regardless of their physical, mental, emotional, political, economic, social, racial, or religious characteristics;
2. Recognize the differences among students and seek to meet their individual needs;

[From *Code of Ethics of the National Education Association of the United States*, adopted by the Representative Assembly, Detroit, Mich., 1952. Washington, National Education Association of the United States, 1952. Reprinted by permission.]

3. Encourage students to formulate and work for high individual goals in the development of their physical, intellectual, creative, and spiritual endowments;
4. Aid students to develop an understanding and appreciation not only of the opportunities and benefits of American democracy but also of their obligations to it;
5. Respect the right of every student to have confidential information about himself withheld except when its release is to authorized agencies or is required by law;
6. Accept no remuneration for tutoring except in accordance with approved policies of the governing board.

SECOND PRINCIPLE: *The members of the teaching profession share with parents the task of shaping each student's purposes and acts toward socially acceptable ends. The effectiveness of many methods of teaching is dependent upon cooperative relationships with the home.*

In fulfilling the obligations of this second principle the teacher will—

1. Respect the basic responsibility of parents for their children;
2. Seek to establish friendly and cooperative relationships with the home;
3. Help to increase the student's confidence in his own home and avoid disparaging remarks which might undermine that confidence;
4. Provide parents with information that will serve the best interests of their children, and be discreet with information received from parents;
5. Keep parents informed about the progress of their children as interpreted in terms of the purposes of the school.

THIRD PRINCIPLE: *The teaching profession occupies a position of public trust involving not only the individual teacher's personal conduct, but also the interaction of the school and the community. Education is most effective when these many relationships operate in a*

friendly, cooperative, and constructive manner.

In fulfilling the obligations of this third principle the teacher will—

1. Adhere to any reasonable pattern of behavior accepted by the community for professional persons;
2. Perform the duties of citizenship, and participate in community activities with due consideration for his obligations to his students, his family and himself;
3. Discuss controversial issues from an objective point of view, thereby keeping his class free from partisan opinions;
4. Recognize that the public schools belong to the people of the community; encourage lay participation in shaping the purposes of the school, and strive to keep the public informed of the educational program which is being provided;
5. Respect the community in which he is employed and be loyal to the school system, community, state, and nation;
6. Work to improve education in the community and to strengthen the community's moral, spiritual, and intellectual life.

FOURTH PRINCIPLE: *The members of the teaching profession have inescapable obligations with respect to employment. These obligations are nearly always shared employer-employee responsibilities based upon mutual respect and good faith.*

In fulfilling the obligations of this fourth principle the teacher will—

1. Conduct professional business thru the proper channels;
2. Refrain from discussing confidential and official information with unauthorized persons;
3. Apply for employment on the basis of competence only, and avoid asking for a specific position known to be filled by another teacher;
4. Seek employment in a professional manner, avoiding such practices as the indiscriminate distribution of applications;
5. Refuse to accept a position when the

vacancy has been created through unprofessional activity or pending controversy over professional policy or the application of unjust personnel practices and procedures;

6. Adhere to the conditions of a contract until service thereunder has been performed, the contract has been terminated by mutual consent, or the contract has otherwise been legally terminated;
7. Give and expect due notice before a change of position is to be made;
8. Be fair in all recommendations that are given concerning the work of other teachers;
9. Accept no compensation from producers of instructional supplies when one's recommendations affect the local purchase or use of such teaching aids;
10. Engage in no gainful employment, outside of his contract, where the employment affects adversely his professional status or impairs his standing with students, associates, and the community;
11. Cooperate in the development of school policies and assume one's professional obligations thereby incurred;
12. Accept one's obligation to the employing board for maintaining a professional level of service.

FIFTH PRINCIPLE: *The teaching profession is distinguished from many other occupations by the uniqueness and quality of the professional relationships among all teachers. Community support and respect are influenced by the standards of teachers and their attitudes toward teaching and other teachers.*

In fulfilling the obligations of this fifth principle the teacher will—

1. Deal with other members of the profession in the same manner as he himself wishes to be treated;
2. Stand by other teachers who have acted on his behalf and at his request;
3. Speak constructively of other teachers, but report honestly to responsible persons in matters involving the welfare of students, the school system, and the profession;
4. Maintain active membership in professional organizations and, thru participation, strive to attain the objectives that justify such organized groups;
5. Seek to make professional growth continuous by such procedures as study, research, travel, conferences, and attendance at professional meetings;
6. Make the teaching profession so attractive in ideals and practices that sincere and able young people will want to enter it.

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The "trade union" function of professional associations of teachers—the function of protecting and advancing the economic and social position of teachers and in providing for reasonable security in employment, tenure, and retirement—has been recognized as valid. The "political" function of the professional organization—the exerting of influence in public decisions and policy-making on issues in which the interests of students, teachers and the schools are at stake—has also been emphasized. Yet a teachers' association is only one of many organized groups within our society. It cannot adequately perform its "trade union" or its "political" functions without collaboration from other organized interest groups. What kind of affiliation with other associations of workers best serves the purposes of this required collaboration?

This issue has been dramatized for American teachers by the development of the American Federation of Teachers. This teachers' group is part of the American Federation of Labor and, as such, is represented in the councils of labor unions and their representatives. There is no clear consensus among American teachers or the American public concerning the appropriateness of such an affiliation with labor. The issue is an important one in its own right and deserves study by all teachers. In addition, its study is useful in developing operational meanings for the functions of the teaching profession, particularly its trade union and political functions, and in clarifying the distinctions between a professional association and other vocational associations.

In order to facilitate the study of this issue, three points of view are presented in the following selection. Samuel Capen, Chancellor of the University of Buffalo from 1922 to 1950, says "No" to the question "Should Teachers Affiliate with Organized Labor?" and indicates the reasons for his answer. Kermit Eby, a well-known minister and college professor who is especially interested in the role of labor unions in our society, argues for an affirmative position. Jesse Newlon finds nothing "unprofessional" in teachers' joining labor-affiliated organizations, but he does raise certain *strategic* questions about the desirability of permanent affiliation as against occasional collaboration on specific issues and in specific campaigns. The effort here is not to *give* the answer to this question but to offer materials useful to the reader in making up his own mind.

The Case Against Affiliation

Teachers, as teachers, should not join labor unions. Bodies of teachers should not become locals of either the American Federation of Labor or the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Nonunionized groups of teachers should not form alliances with national labor organizations for the purpose of bettering their economic condition.

The recent tendency among teachers to cast in their lot with organized labor is unfortunate. It has already damaged the teaching profession. Unless it is checked it will surely cancel the gains in professional status and public recognition which teachers have slowly and painfully won during the last generation. The issue is one of great moment both to teachers and to American society as a

whole. Strangely neither the seriousness of it nor its meaning seems to be understood by the teachers or by the public at large.

The principal reason against the unionization of teachers and their affiliation with national labor organizations lies in the nature of their calling. Teaching is a profession. Professions are not more honorable than other occupations, but they are different. They have certain peculiar characteristics of which the following are the most conspicuous.

A professional practitioner, once he has mastered the basic knowledge and techniques of his craft, does not apply them in rule of thumb fashion. He must constantly recast and recombine the intellectual materials which he uses to meet new problems and situations. He

[From Samuel P. Capen, "The Teaching Profession and Labor Unions," *Journal of General Education*, 1 (July 1947): 275-278. Used by permission of the University of Chicago Press.]

is obliged constantly to exercise his independent judgment and to assume a large measure of individual responsibility. Very little of his work can be routinized and performed mechanically under orders of a superior. In all of it there is a considerable element of art.

All professions serve the public. Public service is indeed their major purpose and their justification. Consequently, the prospect of pecuniary gain is not—or at any rate should not be—the ruling consideration of those who practice them, or the principal inducement that attracts new recruits. All professional practitioners naturally are interested in securing through their work a comfortable livelihood. In fact, unless a profession assures at least this much to its members, it shortly becomes depleted. But even the small handful of members of a few professions who earn large incomes commonly practice their callings less for the money reward than because of an absorbing interest in the work itself.

Both the motivation of professional practitioners and the independent responsibilities laid upon them emphasize the necessity for agreement among them concerning the forms of activity and the methods of practice that are consonant with their obligations as servants of the public. Such agreements are known as professional ethics. Every profession has developed more or less formalized codes of ethics. In some of the older professions the codes are specific. Violations are punished by exclusion from the profession. The newer professions generally content themselves with common understandings regarding professional conduct and visit no penalties except disapproval upon those who transgress these understandings. But whatever the penalties invoked, it is important to note that the rules of professional ethics are not imposed upon the profession from without. They are evolved by the professions for the improvement of professional practice and hence for the improvement of the service to the public; and they are for the most part enforced by the professions. Professional associations—of which there are many in all professions—nearly always have the double purpose of promoting

proper professional conduct and elevating the standards of competence of the members.

In respect to their purposes, their methods of work, their ideals, and their relations to those who furnish them the means of livelihood, the members of professions are in a totally different situation from members of labor organizations. Those organizations exist primarily, and properly, to secure material benefits for their members. They must of necessity be in competition with other groups of citizens. When they cannot achieve their purposes by other means, they have at hand the instrument of the strike. The weapon of the strike gives them their competitive power, whether they use it or not. The American people have long recognized labor's right to strike—although the right to strike against the government or against the public safety is not generally recognized. But the strike is always against somebody, some portion of the public large or small. It is a weapon of warfare. For the time being the party struck against is the enemy.

Individual citizens may feel hostile toward a profession. But no large group of citizens is ever hostile toward any profession so long as the profession lives up to the ideals of self-improvement and public service to which it is committed. And no profession can assume an attitude of hostility toward the public, or toward a particular segment of the public, and continue to claim recognition as a profession.

What has been said applies to the incompatibility of the purposes and character of labor organizations on the one hand and of the purposes and character of the professions—all professions—on the other. The teaching profession is in a class by itself among the professions. It has peculiar obligations, not shared by other professions, which demand inexorably that it keep itself clear of entangling alliances with labor organizations, or indeed with any other organizations of citizens formed to promote special group interests. Apparently these obligations are not under-

stood by some members of the profession. I venture, therefore, to summarize them.

Other professions serve only a portion of the public: the sick public, or the public which must have recourse to the courts, or the public which has construction in hand, or the public in need of relief. The teaching profession serves the whole public. Literally no one fails to be a recipient of its services at some time in his life. Moreover, the vast majority of teachers are public employees, whose salaries are paid from public funds, toward which all taxpaying citizens contribute.

The nature of the teacher's service is likewise peculiar. The profession is charged with the custody and transmission of the social heritage of the nation and the race. In the process of transmission many of its members cannot avoid the interpretation—in the light of their own knowledge and judgment—of current happenings, nor can they avoid the attempt to relate these happenings to the experience and standards of value of the past. This is particularly the case with teachers of the social sciences and the humanities.

Is there anyone who does not believe that the social heritage should be passed on in as unbiased a manner as possible? Or is there anyone who would think it proper for a teacher to take advantage of his position to present strictly partisan interpretations of contemporary controversial issues? Among the most controversial of the issues of the moment are those which concern labor and management and the relations of both to the general public. All parties to these controversies are eager to enlist supporters and especially supporters who in some degree influence public opinion.

The teaching profession has fought for what is known as academic freedom not in order that its members might be unchallenged propagandists, but in order that they might be free to seek the truth and proclaim it, to be critical and impartial amidst the storms of partisanship.

It is all but inconceivable that an avowed partisan of one side in a fierce social conflict can interpret both sides without prejudice. And even if an occasional partisan can rise to this high level of judicial behavior, few persons will believe that he can. In a period when economic, political, and even ethical concepts are the subjects of such widespread discussion and are exercising such a decisive influence upon our population, the teaching profession can play no favorites. If it is to retain the confidence of the people, it cannot even have the appearance of playing favorites. The touchstone of the profession's integrity must be its official impartiality.

I am persuaded that the following are categorical imperatives for the teaching profession. It cannot properly join forces with any other exclusive groups within the body politic. It cannot properly make common cause with labor or capital, with Democrats or Republicans, with any sect or religious body, or with any other collection of citizens organized for purposes that lie outside the purposes of the teaching profession itself. To further its own interests it cannot even make offensive and defensive alliances with any of these groups in the hope of enlisting their support. Its allegiance must be to the whole public, never to some partisan body within the state.

The Case for Affiliation

The truly successful teacher is the thoroughly alive teacher. She teaches from her experience. The knowledge she has accumulated

from classroom and textbook has been melted by life. Life to her is more than the routine of home and school—it is contact with

[From Kermit Eby, "Teachers Unions? Yes!" *Progressive Education*, 20 (Oct. 1943): 260, 262, 301. Reprinted by permission of the author and *Progressive Education*.]

the struggle of mankind for a better tomorrow. The really superior teacher knows her boys and girls as part of a family, part of a community, part of a state. She is interested in the welfare of her students as a part of the social organism, and in the welfare of society as it affects her students. She knows, if she is at all alert, that it is not enough to talk about health and housing and nutrition; that concrete things must be done to make medical service, good food and adequate homes available for all. She understands that she can neither live in a vacuum, nor teach in one.

- She is a part of life!

The ideal teacher has convictions. She is not one who believes that it is possible to be neutral on controversial issues. Democracy, to her, is something to be preserved, nothing to be neutral about. And in adding two and two, she insists it's important whether the answer equals four bombs or four homes. Airplanes to her are a boon to mankind if they carry serum, a curse when they destroy cities. Boys and girls are not means to ends. They are the ends for which we strive to build a better world. This teacher loves them all—black or white, rich or poor, Protestant or Catholic or Jew. Otherwise, she could not really influence them.

Believing as she does, she seeks to identify herself with groups of like-minded people, in an effort to take her part in the march of progress. Her seeking must inevitably lead her to the labor movement, to the teachers' union—not because the labor movement is perfect, or the teachers' union without its faults, but because in these organizations she finds people with interests and beliefs common to hers and because organized labor in America from its very beginning fought for free public education. In our modern world, education is essential to democracy, labor leaders have always believed. That democratic institutions cannot survive among illiterate citizens is labor's conviction.

The creative teacher with the attitude I have described needs the teachers' union to protect her tenure and her job security. It has fought innumerable battles in the interest of academic freedom, over the years. It has pro-

tected the fearless teacher who refuses to permit a threat to her job to keep her from teaching the truth as she sees it.

Boys and girls are influenced not only by what is taught them, but by what is omitted. The schools of America have been the agents of the *status quo* for far too long, because teachers have ignored consumer problems, labor and political and economic questions.

Our textbooks and our curricula need liberalization to include materials which will prepare our boys and girls to become functional citizens in our complex society. They need to know how a union operates, how a political party is run and how government takes place. The best way for them to learn these things is from a teacher who has learned them by experience.

It was my good fortune to study political science in one of the great universities, under the best of teachers. I didn't really know how government operated, though, until I had gone to a political convention, lobbied at legislatures and run a political campaign.

My own pupils learned more about government when I took them with me to city council meetings, to the state legislature, and to party conventions than I ever could have taught them from a text.

Almost all my working life has been spent teaching or working for teachers. From my experience I have learned that teachers are almost unanimous in the feeling of frustration which grows out of line and staff administration. They are told what to do by administrators who are not teaching and have not taught for many years. Consequently, a state of war develops between teachers and administration, and energies which should be spent in teaching are spent in battle.

Partly because of this, American education, along with American industry, needs the development and perfection of collective bargaining and labor-management techniques. The teacher, like the industrial worker, needs the assurance that his talents are recognized, used and appreciated. Policy in a school system should be the by-product of the best combined thinking of teachers and administration, and the responsibility for the execution

of policy should also be shared. It has always been my contention that, if I were a school superintendent, I would want in my school a strong union of teachers willing to assume responsibility. If such a technique for democratic administration were worked out and put to work, we would need fewer resolutions on "democracy in education"!

We need unions, then, to give teachers the courage and strength to meet the administrators as equals, and to free teachers from the inferiority feelings which now prevail among them. The teachers of America must be convinced first that teaching is an art, and second that competent teaching deserves adequate income.

Teachers' unions fight for adequate incomes and decent working conditions. It is a disgrace to our nation to permit 100,000 schoolrooms to go teacherless because teachers cannot afford to stay in teaching. A nation which permits this condition to continue is not only forcing teachers out of their chosen profession, but is robbing the boys and girls of their rightful heritage.

The alert teacher must have opportunities for intellectual growth, opportunities to buy books, to subscribe to magazines, meet people. She cannot do these things if her income allows her mere subsistence. Nor can she do a good job of teaching if her every waking moment is harassed by economic pressures. Teaching should be a rich experience, instead of a drudgery filled with untoward strain and stress.

Attitudes, incidentally, are contagious. We develop democratic ideals by our treatment

of the boys and girls in our classrooms, not by the resolutions we write at conventions. Character is shaped in everyday contact, not through the formal tests we give and the records we file. Warm, generous human beings develop warm, generous human beings.

Because this is so, the teachers' unions fight with enthusiasm for the tools of civilized living: sufficient leisure, normal family life and job security.

These tools for living are dependent on income; public school income is dependent on taxation; and adequate tax income is dependent on a healthy community, a community both willing and able to finance its schools and other community services. Such a community is usually one where labor is strong and influential, where its weight is felt on boards of education and state legislatures. Practically speaking, teachers need allies in the achievement of their legislative programs, and labor has a record of being their best ally on local, state and federal levels.

There is no doubt that, to keep educational opportunity equalized, the schools of tomorrow will need federal aid. Affiliation with labor assures teachers of a base powerful enough to throw its influence on even the highest levels of government.

Teachers, then, should join unions for idealistic and pragmatic reasons, to protect academic freedom, to protect themselves, to protect the integrity of their profession, to secure an adequate income; but, above all, to take part in the people's struggles and to grow roots in the community.

Local Conditions and Affiliation

This brings us squarely to the question of the form that cooperation with other organized groups shall take. The most critical issue in this field at the present time is that of the

desirability of teacher affiliation with organized labor. One organization, the American Federation of Teachers, took this step over twenty years ago.

[From Jesse H. Newlon, *Education for Democracy in Our Time*, McGraw-Hill, 1939, pp. 190-193. Used by permission. Footnotes omitted.]

Assuming that the labor union in question is devoted to the interests of democracy and that it employs the method of democracy both in the conduct of its own affairs and in all its public relations, there can be no question of the constitutional, professional, or moral right of a teacher to belong to it or of an organization of teachers to affiliate with it. This leaves open, however, the question of whether such affiliation is desirable, and that question involves a number of important considerations. Only through organization can the millions of workers who have no share in the ownership of the instruments of production and distribution make their influence effectively felt in our economic and political life. That teachers have a community of interests with organized labor and should cooperate with labor more closely is scarcely debatable.

But a categorical answer cannot be given at the present time to the question of whether teachers should enter the organized labor movement. Decisions must be made in the light of conditions. Conditions vary from state to state, from community to community, and from time to time. The great body of the American people is not labor- or union-minded. The industrial workers constitute barely a third of all the workers of the country and less than half of these are in unions. The number of industrial workers seems actually to decline with the advance of technology. But few of the white-collar and professional workers are unionized. Union labor will, therefore, perhaps for a long time, continue as a minority group. There is much reason to believe that the political importance of industrial workers has been greatly exaggerated under the influence of Marxian thought. The assumption that the political role of industrial workers will be more important than that of workers in the white-collar occupations or on farms certainly needs to be reexamined, especially in view of the part played by other groups in the last twenty-five years in the revolutionary changes in Italy, Germany, and even in Russia. The middle class is still strong in this country and comprises many elements. There is much reason to believe that the role of the intellectuals, a large group in modern

society that includes teachers, may be more critical than that of almost any other element in society. In its insistence that the relation between teacher and administrator is comparable to the relationship between the worker and the boss or owner in industry, the teachers' union has certainly not been on sound ground.

The argument for affiliation must rest upon the fact that organized labor has been and is today, despite much confusion as to purpose and methods and serious divisions, working for a better life for all those who carry on the productive work and services of society. It is working for the improvement of the lot of the common people. Some unions are conservative, even reactionary in outlook. Some are bedeviled by factions that are pursuing objectives and employing tactics that are corrosive and disruptive and that, however desirous of improving economic conditions these factions may be, sow discord where good will and cooperation are needed. But organized labor is today one of the strongest supports of American democracy and of public education. A strong labor movement is essential if the American people are to cope effectively with the economic and political problems that confront them. Such a labor movement must cooperate with farmers and with other occupational groups and with the liberal political forces of the country. It is for these reasons that I believe a strong case can be made for teacher affiliation with labor. Affiliation will certainly be defensible and may be desirable where teachers can effectively insist that the union in all its purposes and methods conform to the ideals of democracy and to those principles foundational to democratic, professional, and efficient educational administration. For teachers to accept the leadership of organized labor uncritically and subserviently would be as objectionable as subservience to organized business and industry or to any other group. And to me it seems also clear that in many localities and in many situations membership in teachers' unions is not as yet practicable.

At this point I should like to make a distinction that seems to me important. Political

cooperation can have many of the advantages of affiliation, with fewer of the disadvantages under present conditions. Obviously, the political situation does not indicate the desirability of teachers' organizations entering a political party now, though, as we have seen, a condition may arise that will leave no other option for those teachers who want to work effectively for the defense of democracy through a fuller realization of its possibilities. Under present conditions teachers should be selective in their support of candidates and of parties. They should make it clear that they will collectively oppose parties and candidates that are not committed to the promotion of the best interests of education and of democracy. Teachers should cooperate with those

political groups working for such broad objectives as an intelligently conceived program of social security, investment by government in housing and similar enterprises, adequate wages-and-hours legislation, the social use of taxation, the provision of real jobs for all at decent wages, adequate extension of essential social services in such fields as health and physical education, the development of agencies for the planning and coordination of our economic life, and for other measures. The collaboration of the teachers of Colorado with labor and farm groups in the enactment of an income-tax measure is an example of the type of deliberate political cooperation that is desirable and often feasible where organic affiliation is not possible.

SUMMARY

Broadly speaking, there are three dimensions of the work of the teacher: teaching in the classroom; participating with other teachers, parents, and the administrative personnel in planning and administering the school system in which he works; and cooperating with other teachers in protecting and advancing the interests of the educational profession. This chapter has been concerned with the third of these dimensions. Unless teachers take their responsibilities to the profession seriously, both the schools and teaching as an occupation will suffer severely. In our large, multigroup society, unity of purpose and effort through organization is necessary if the voice of the profession is to be heard at the council table in the community, the state and the nation. Hence, in the interests both of the teachers and of education, a strong, effective teachers' organization is required.

Since 1900 there has been a strong tendency on the part of a large number of occupations, including teaching, to seek the prestige, authority, and autonomy that accompany recognized professional status. There are, however, certain essential conditions which must be met before an occupational group can be admitted to the ranks of the professions. The most important of these conditions is the possession of an extensive body of systematic theoretical knowledge which must be learned through study as contrasted with apprenticeship and which is necessary to the proper performance of the work of the occupation. But there are also other necessary conditions for full professional recognition: (1) that the social office or function may be performed only by the certified members of the occupational groups; (2) that the activities involved in the performance of this social office are fundamentally intellectual in character—that they require, in addition to skill, a large measure of intelligent judgment and personal responsibility; (3) that a strong professional organization determine the content and standards of the training required for admission to the profession and which regulates the professional conduct of the members of the profession; (4) that its members be sufficiently devoted

to its social office to regard their task as a sacred duty rather than merely as a means of earning a livelihood.

Teaching has received considerable recognition as a profession—more than has been accorded to many of the occupational groups which have sought to become professions. But it has not as yet attained full professional status. Among the major obstacles to the further professionalization of teaching are (1) the persistence of a powerful craft mentality (*i.e.*, a strong antitheoretical bias); (2) the relatively low social status of teachers; (3) the large proportion of teachers who do not intend to make teaching a permanent career; (4) the decidedly low pay for teaching; (5) the comparatively inadequate training required for certification; (6) the high degree of segmentation in the profession; (7) the constant pressures exerted by a large number of organized interest groups seeking to shape, at various points, the educational program of the public school; (8) the severe restrictions placed on the personal freedom of teachers in some communities; and (9) the lack of a powerful and effective professional organization.

There are a large number of local, state, and national organizations representing many of the diverse interests and groups found in the educational profession. Two of these organizations, the National Education Association and the smaller American Federation of Teachers, seek to represent all teachers—the N. E. A. including the higher administrative officials as well as classroom teachers. But there are thousands of teachers who are not affiliated with either of these organizations. Further, the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers are sharply divided on two important issues: (1) Should classroom teachers form an organization of their own apart from administrative officials directly representing boards of education? And (2) should teachers' organizations affiliate with organized labor? The American Association of University Professors, which is connected with neither the N. E. A. nor the Federation, has answered the first question in the affirmative but has not affiliated with labor.

Many professional organizations have as their primary purpose the promotion of study and research designed to improve the work of the profession. This, indeed, is properly a major function of all professional organizations. In addition, however, the central organization representing the entire profession has a second basic function—that of protecting and advancing the interests of the profession. In this latter role it must perform effectively four major tasks: (1) enforcing the ethical code and standards of performance established by the profession; (2) advancing the economic and the other occupational interests of its members; (3) protecting professional activities from undue outside interference and from a serious lack of necessary financial support; and (4) promoting the basic interest of the profession in society.

One of the essential prerogatives of a profession, growing out of its expert knowledge, is a marked degree of responsible autonomy in the conduct of its professional work. In the case of education, professional autonomy does not mean that the public has no right to an interest in the purposes or the results of education. But the education profession should exercise strong leadership in lay-profession cooperation in educational policy-making. And within the broad limits of the general policies thus determined, the

profession should be granted considerable autonomy in the execution and achievement of educational policies and purposes. In particular, academic freedom must be protected and extended, since it is essential both to the right to learn and to the preservation of a free society.

THINGS TO DO AND BOOKS TO READ

1. What distinguishes a profession from other kinds of occupations? Is teaching a profession? Justify your answer.

2. What is meant by "professional autonomy of the teacher"? What is (or should be) the relation between the public and the profession with respect to the question of autonomy? Is it different from the relations that do (or should) exist between the public and physicians? Lawyers? Journalists? What is the justification, if any, for teacher autonomy? Consider, in this connection, the nature and purpose of teacher oaths. In what sense, if any, are such oaths justifiable? Not justifiable?

3. What is the meaning of academic freedom? How does it differ from the teacher's civic freedom? What is the justification of academic freedom? What responsibilities does such freedom place upon the teacher as to *a*) methods; *b*) classroom control; *c*) grade placement of materials; *d*) examinations and marks; *e*) out-of-school conduct?

What are the main challenges to academic freedom today? How can teachers best protect this freedom?

4. What is the substance of the arguments for and against affiliation of educational organizations with organized labor? Where do you stand on this issue? Why?

5. Recall, from your experience as a student, instances in which the behavior of teachers seemed to be unfair. How, if at all, do these instances reflect violation of the ethical code? Interview teachers to find instances where questions of professional ethics have arisen in their work. What behavior is appropriate in such instances?

1. The most searching examination of the teaching profession from every aspect of its status in current society is presented in Myron K. Lieberman's *Education as a Profession*. In connection with this chapter you will find it especially helpful on questions of autonomy, affiliation with labor, ethical conduct, and the general status of teaching as a profession.

2. For a descriptive account of various aspects of the profession of teaching, including ethics, academic freedom, and tenure, see William A. Yeager's *Administration and the Teacher*, Chapters 9, 16, 17, and 20-23.

3. The question of academic freedom is perhaps the most crucial one a teacher has to face, and a thorough understanding of it is not easy to acquire. The following references will introduce you to some of the more important phases of the question and will supply background materials for further study of the finer points. Harry Steele Commager's *Freedom, Loyalty, Dissent* is a forthright discussion of intellectual freedom in the context of present-day anxiety. J. B. Bury's *A History of Freedom of Thought* is a classic treatment and should be read by every teacher.

4. For an interesting and stimulating collection of current materials on academic freedom, see *Crucial Issues in Education*, edited by Harry Ehlers, pp. 1-117.

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